1101

THE

HISTORY

OF

MYSELF AND MY FRIEND,

A NOVEL:

BY

ANNE PLUMPTRE.

VOL. I.

1101

Just published,

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By ANNE PLUMPTRE.

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THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

The Power that did create, can change the scene
Of things; make mean of great, and great of mean;
The brightest glory can eclipse with might,
And place the most obscure in dazzling light.

MILTON.

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1813.

MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL. THE TANJORE

PREFACE
AND
DEDICATION.

11 Q.1

WRITE your own History and that of your Friend!—Why, who knows or cares about either you or your Friend?—Courteous reader, I do not think it very polite to tell a man to his face, that nobody knows or cares about him, and if I were not very peaceable-minded, it might bring thee into rather an awkward predicament. Granted, however, that it is so:—This I consider rather as an argument for than against the undertaking, since I hope and trust that, from the time my book is published, the name of Samuel Danville will be universally known, and people will be exceedingly interested about him; and I will fairly confess, courteous reader, that I am extremely solicitous to see my

name become one of great publicity, and no less ambitious of exciting, in a high degree, the interest of my fellow-creatures! Then, as to my friend, the name of Armstrong must be allowed one of infinite notoriety, though unhappily the name of Danville may not be so. And how does any body know that my friend may not be a descendant of the great poet whose name he bears? If he be so, the world are always deeply interested in the *descendants* of a poet at least, even though the poor poet himself may have been doomed to experience the most mortifying neglect.

But though my principal incitements to take up the pen were those above stated, yet I must do myself the justice to say, that they were not the sole ones. I was besides actuated by strong feelings of philanthropy, and an earnest desire of contributing towards the entertainment of the public.

I had once proposed giving my work the title of CONFESSIONS, since I thought that THE CONFESSIONS OF SAMUEL DANVILLE would look extremely well in a title page, and that is a very important consideration in composing a book. Besides, as I have *confessed* that a desire of notoriety is one of my leading motives in commencing Author, this title seemed particularly appropriate. On reflecting, however, more deeply, it seemed to me that the days of CONFESSIONS were gone by; that the present are rather the days of LIVES and HISTORIES; and I am well aware that an Author who writes from the pure love of fame, must study the prevailing fashions of the day, and even sacrifice to them, if necessary, the look of his title page. I have therefore preferred giving my work the title of a HISTORY.

To that Public, then, whose interest I am so anxious to excite, whose enter-

tainment I am so desirous to promote, this true HISTORY is very respectfully inscribed by

Their most obedient,
And as I hope to become, through
the immense sale of my book,
most *obliged* humble servant,

SAMUEL DANVILLE.

THE HISTORY

OF

MYSELF AND MY FRIEND.

CHAPTER I.

A dialogue in a sick-room.—The character of a college quiz.—Parental affection.—Odd notions entertained by a young divine.—A departure for the continent.

"THIS is kind indeed," said Mr. Worledge with a voice rendered tremulous by the paralytic stroke under which he was suffering, and addressing his cousin Mr. Anderson as the latter entered his sick room:—"this is kind indeed," said he,—"and you will accompany me again to Barèges?"

"To the world's end, if it would be of any use to you," answered Mr. Anderson.

"I have consented to go at the earnest recommendation of my physicians, and at the no less earnest entreaties of my friends; but I

had rather that both would have suffered me to stay and die quietly at home."

"I cannot say Amen to the latter sentiment:—on the contrary, I think that your physicians have done very right to recommend, and your friends to entreat, and that you do very right to comply with their recommendations and entreaties. Remember the benefit you received on a former occasion from those waters, in conjunction with the fine, pure, clear air which you breathed for so many months."

"I remember it with gratitude:—but, my good cousin, I was then fifteen years younger than I am now, and that was a first attack:—I cannot expect the waters to prove equally efficacious after a second attack, and at a so much more advanced period of life."

"But you are only now between fifty and sixty years of age:—you may then reasonably hope for considerable benefit, though not perhaps for such a perfect recovery as in the former instance. At least the experiment is worth trying; and we shall both revisit with pleasure a spot with which we were so much charmed."

"I shall be a sad burden upon you."

"That is a word not to be found in the dictionary of friendship, and my friendship to you cannot, I hope, be doubted. Talk not then of a burden; but believe that to be of

use to you is always a particular satisfaction to me."

"I can only say again, this is truly kind.— And you have thought of the other matter mentioned in my letter?"

"About a curate to supply your place here?"

"Even so."

"It has been duly attended to; and I have one in my eye who I think will suit you exactly,—a young man recently elected fellow of our college. He is not yet ordained, but will be so next Sunday, and can enter upon the curacy directly."

"Not yet ordained!—He is then very young; —I had rather you had procured me an older person. But you think him steady, I presume, or you would not recommend him. He will not, I hope, be running after the hounds when he should be making a sermon, or embroiling himself with his neighbours by poaching on their manors."

"Of these things there is not the least danger:—I much doubt whether he even knows how to fire a gun; and I am very sure that he never took aim at a bird in his life:—he has, indeed, a strange fancy of not liking to kill any thing. He has, in short, been something of a quiz at college; but I thought you would be so good as to overlook that. He is perfectly ig-

norant of the important science of twisting knockers off the doors of houses; he never drinks any thing stronger than water, or at most a dish of tea or coffee; and is less fond of cards than of books. But it is enough to say that he was the senior wrangler of his year, and that, you know, implies that he must be a quiz."

"Well, I don't see any thing very objectionable in all this.—And you say that he can come immediately to reside here?"

"Immediately.—He is, indeed, anxious to come as soon as possible. He has three sisters upon his hands, for whom he wants a home and an asylum."

"Three sisters!—Upon my word I think that is having rather too much of a good thing. —I hope my curacy is not all that they have to depend upon."

"Not absolutely: he has his fellowship besides, and the ladies have a thousand pounds each. They belong to a very ancient family in the North, which I am pretty sure you know by name, the Armstrongs of Winstanton. The father died about three months ago, after having been two years a widower. His property was very considerable; but he was of that description of beings, who think that younger sons have quite as much of the good things of this

world as they have any right to expect, if they arrive at a piece of cheese to their bread: as to being comfortably provided for by their father, 'tis a thing to which they can have no claim whatever. With regard to daughters his creed was, that if they have not address enough to get themselves husbands by the time they are eighteen, they are extremely well off if they are not turned pennyless out of doors. He prided himself upon leaving the family estates unimpaired to his eldest son; but regularly spent every shilling of his annual income, so that he did not die with a very large stock of ready money in the hands of his bankers. True to his principle with regard to younger sons, two that he left were not so much as named in his will; and to the daughters he nobly bequeathed a thousand pounds each, after having given them ideas, from the style of living in his house, which ought not to have been given to any young ladies unless they were to have an annual income of nearly that amount."

"Poor things!—And what are they all to do now?"

"Of the daughters I know nothing, so that I cannot say how they are likely to support this reverse. The second son was sent out some years ago as a trader to India, but is not supposed to be in a very prosperous way; the

third son, my young friend, happily for himself never was a man of much expense; indeed if he had been so, another residence than your parsonage would probably by this time have been provided for him. His father made him such a scanty allowance at college, that if he had been endowed with as much taste and spirit as many of our young Cantabs, he must have incurred debts which would by this time have fixed him in a jail for life."

"And does not the elder brother do any thing for his sisters?"

"Yes, he has given them mourning."

"How extremely generous!"

"Why, indeed, to speak impartially upon the matter, it may be made a question whether in so doing he has not gone as far as was fairly in his power, all circumstances considered. While a youth at college, he had the misfortune to fall in love with a lady very rich in beauty, but not equally so in fortune; and in an unlucky hour they took a matrimonial trip to Scotland, which it is extremely probable both have repented of almost ever since. The father, who, as you must have inferred from the statements already made, was not very generously disposed towards any body but himself, it is strongly conjectured rejoiced in secret at not having been consulted by his son in this affair,

since it furnished him with something like an excuse for the parsimony which he would probably in any case have practised. The allowance that he made to his eldest son, as a married man, was measured out with the same sparing hand as that dispensed to the youngest for his maintenance at the university; and since the young people, as is commonly the case under such circumstances, have, by the blessing of Providence, had an addition to their family every year, so that they are now the parents of eight very fine children, they have been led, almost unavoidably, into contracting large debts merely to feed and clothe them. The consequence is, that they must live for several years to come with great prudence, in order to free themselves from these incumbrances."

" Upon my word, a hopeful account of the family!"

" 'Tis, as in most cases, a mixture of dross and ore; only that unfortunately the dross is here rather the preponderating portion of the mass."

" So because your fellow collegiate is the worst off of any of the sons, he is to have the additional burden of helping out his sisters?"

" Among other odd notions which he entertains, he has taken it into his head that he seem-

to be the person pointed out by Providence as their comforter and protector in their present forlorn and desolate state. He is therefore anxious to get a curacy, where he can have the parsonage house to reside in, as a home to offer them; this appearing the most effectual means of assisting them which in their relative situations he could devise. Having always considered me as his friend, he had applied to me to assist him in his researches for such an establishment; not very long, my good cousin, before I heard of your attack, and received your request that I would look out a curate for you."

"Indeed, by your account, both myself and my parish seem particularly fortunate in the substitute you have procured."

"Certainly not very unfortunate:—both you and they might have been worse off."

Enough was here said by Mr. Anderson to satisfy Mr. Worledge:—the treaty with regard to the curacy was therefore soon arranged, signed, and sealed, Mr. Anderson being endowed with full powers, by the intended curate, as a negotiator on his side. The latter was immediately invited to come as soon as the ordination should be over, in order to be introduced to his principal, and to enter upon his office,

remaining a guest at the parsonage till the rector's departure, when he was to be left master of it.

This important preliminary being settled, the preparations for the journey to Barèges were now carried on with great alacrity; and in ten days after the arrival of the new curate, the two cousins departed for the continent, Mr. Worledge being extremely satisfied with the hands in which he had left the care of his flock. Thus was the Rev. Bernard Armstrong established in the curacy of Langham in Wiltshire, and here, about three weeks after, he was joined by his three sisters.

CHAPTER II.

The squire's daughters and the curate's sisters two very different descriptions of persons.—The truth of this exemplified.—Experiments upon reformation in a variety of ways, and the success attendant upon them.—The first dawnings of an important revolution.

THE Miss Armstrongs could not by any means comprehend, on their first settling at Langham, that there is in the estimation of the world a vast difference between the daughters of a gentleman of large fortune and the sisters of a country curate. At Winstanton they had been accustomed to live in a noble mansion with a long train of servants, a profuse table, and elegant equipage, and never to think of stirring out without that equipage, excepting just about their own grounds: by their migration these things were exchanged for living in a humble rectory, with only one maid, and a man who was something between a house servant and a labourer, and being obliged, when they wanted to go out, to make use of their own feet instead of those of the horses. And though they felt that all this was so, and could not but be sensible of the alteration,

they yet felt that they were in reality the same individual Miss Armstrongs in the county of Wiltshire that they had been in the county of Durham, the descendants in a direct line of a very ancient and distinguished family, and could not conceive that they had not the same right to deference and distinction in the one place which had been accorded them in the other. It was impossible for them to comprehend that any thing was abated of the right they had assumed while under their father's roof, whether justly entitled to it or not it is not my business to decide, of giving themselves a number of pretty little ornamental graces and airs, and showing all their neighbours how much they considered themselves as their superiors. They were not aware that if these claims had been acquiesced in by the neighbours at Winstanton, it was to the number of acres of land of which their father was proprietor, and to his profuse style of living, that they were indebted for the acquiescence, not to any qualities inherent in themselves; and they expected to find among the neighbours at Langham, the same complacency towards the high-bred manifestations of insolence and contempt with which they thought it expedient to honour the circle around them.

Margaret, the eldest of these young ladies,

was now nearly twenty-four years of age; Fanny, the second, was just turned of twenty-one; but Eleanor, the youngest, was only in her fifteenth year. They were little known to their brother Bernard. He had been educated at Winchester school; and having at that time an uncle residing in Hampshire, Mr. Armstrong, the father, had commonly desired this gentleman to let the boy spend his holidays with him, that the expense of journeys to so great a distance as his own residence might be saved. During the time of his continuance at school, Bernard had therefore only been at home three times, and after he was removed to college not once: his sisters and he were consequently almost strangers to each other, nor had he any idea of their being people of such very great importance in their own eyes. Indeed if he had been ever so well informed concerning the opinions they entertained on this head while living with their father, he would not have conceived it possible that the very great change of circumstances they had experienced had operated no change in this respect. To his regrets therefore was added a secret astonishment, as he listened to the ridicule bestowed upon some of the neighbours who had visited them, and still more upon the wives and daughters of the farmers in the pa-

rish; or witnessed the fashionable sneer and genteel toss of the head with which the courtesy of the latter was returned, if by chance they were met and saluted by them in their walks.

Yet to notice matters of this kind to young ladies in any other than terms of admiration at the wit displayed in them, or the elegance and grace with which they are performed, is always a very delicate point. Mr. Armstrong besides felt his situation with regard to his sisters so particularly delicate, that whatever inward chagrin such discourtesies might give to a mind which was the very seat of courtesy and urbanity, he was extremely reluctant to make this chagrin known. He was fearful that any strictures made by him upon the conduct of his sisters in the way of censure, might have too much the appearance of presuming upon the obligations he was conferring on them to assume a dictatorial tone very unbecoming to him. He felt this the more strongly, since he thought that considering his own youth, admonitions which from an older person could bear no other interpretation than being the result of friendship, and a desire of amending what was censurable, might from him have an air of pedantry and conceit. In fact the eldest sister being older than himself, it might be re-

plied that she was as capable of knowing how to conduct herself with propriety as he was of instructing her. He hoped too that a short time would make them more sensible to the difference of their situation, and that without his interference the change he wished to see might be effected.

But the reproofs which he was cautious of giving, the neighbours, who did not feel the same delicacy upon the subject, failed not to administer, and the slights put upon others by the Miss Armstrongs were soon returned with interest. In particular, certain sarcastic remarks which had occasionally been made upon the farmers' daughters, if by chance they were met by the young ladies, in a manner that they could not fail to be heard by them, roused at length the latent spirit in the bosoms of the young farmeresses. Since in their ideas dress made the sole difference between man and man, or rather between woman and woman, and they found that they could afford to spend more money in dress than the Miss Armstrongs, they thought themselves far the best gentlewomen, and took care to let the young ladies know their sentiments,—with the addition, that they considered them as proud minxes who gave themselves airs that did not at all become a poor curate's sisters.

At length this idle contention of vanity began to assume a form so degrading to the young ladies, and so extremely ridiculous, that Mr. Armstrong thought he should be highly to blame, if he suffered feelings in his own mind, of the justice and accuracy of which he was never quite certain, to prevent his noticing and endeavouring to put a stop to it. He did therefore assume resolution enough to expostulate with his sisters, and endeavour to convince them that the tone and manner which they had thought proper to assume were unbecoming in any circumstances, and in persons under those in which they were placed were not merely unbecoming, but absolutely contemptible.

A considerable time elapsed before he could perceive that his lectures produced any effect, or before he could make them comprehend that the humility and courtesy which from persons in any situation are considered but as matters of decency, are particularly expected in those who had suffered such a reverse of fortune as they had done. At length however some gleams of hope appeared that they had not been wholly ineffectual: indeed it was scarcely possible that precepts so enforced by example as his were, should not in time produce at least a partial effect, and it was with

extreme pleasure he saw the young ladies begin gradually to assume a somewhat more courteous style of behaviour. Eleanor, who from being so much younger than the others had less settled habits, was the first on whom her brother's admonitions and exhortations seemed to make a deep impression; and he, perceiving that she listened to him more readily than the others, became naturally more assiduous in his endeavours to correct what he thought amiss in her, and to form her mind after his own ideas:—thus a stronger affection was soon awakened in his mind towards her than towards the elder sisters.

Yet, however regretting these defects of character, and feeling himself compelled to remonstrate against them, no abatement ever took place in his kindness to any of the three, no relaxation in his endeavours to promote their happiness in every way sanctioned by reason and by his principles, or permitted by his means. Nor, though his affections might from circumstances be drawn more closely to Eleanor, did he allow these feelings to lead him into showing towards her a partiality either mortifying or unjust to her sisters;—he endeavoured uniformly so to conduct himself towards all, that no preference to one should be apparent. Still he could not help feeling that

while a sense of duty was the active principle which dictated his behaviour to Margaret and Fanny, the regard he showed to Eleanor was the impulse of the heart;—all considerations of duty apart, strong affection would have urged the same conduct towards her.

He who could fulfil in so exemplary a manner his fraternal duties, was not likely to be deficient in any others connected with the different relations in which he stood to society, whether of a public or of a private nature. In his delegated office of spiritual pastor of the parish he showed himself perfectly alive to the obligations which so important a charge imposed upon him. He read the church service with a pious solemnity alike removed from every appearance of carelessness and inattention, and from that conceit and affectation which seems rather to court the attention of the congregation to the reader, than to the Almighty Being whom they are assembled to address;—which, instead of seeming anxious above all things to impress their minds with that devout adoration due to the Power to whom we owe all things, on whom we are dependent for whatever we enjoy of this world's goods, to whose bounty we are indebted for our very existence, seems much rather to aim at inspiring them with profound admiration of his own

oratorical talents. His sermons were plain practical lessons of morality, level to the comprehension of the most uncultivated understanding, yet enforcing duties not less binding to the most cultivated. He abstained from the discussion of abstruse metaphysical points of doctrine, considering them as rather calculated to perplex than to instruct the minds of the unlearned congregation in a country village. Regarding the Ten Commandments with the Sermon of Jesus Christ on the Mount as the most simple yet most comprehensive code of morals ever given to mortals,—as guides in following which the mind could never be led astray, and as having this advantage over every other code, that they could never become antiquated or obsolete, or want any commentary to elucidate or explain them;—regarding them in this light, they were the portions of Scripture which he always recommended the most strenuously to the study of his parishioners, while at the same time he made the precepts they contain the leading subjects of his discourses from the pulpit.

His principal Mr. Worledge, though a very worthy good-hearted man, yet had been troubled all his life with habits of indolence not to be overcome, and these had rather been increased than diminished by the paralytic stroke

which occasioned his first journey to Barèges. He had therefore never been so active in regulating the manners and habits of his parishioners as it is desirable that every parish priest should be. For these deficiencies his deputy now made ample amends. Mr. Armstrong's means of giving to the poor were of necessity extremely limited, since the union of his own income with that of his sisters produced altogether by no means an ample provision for four people. But he was not anxious to give away large sums in alms; he did not consider this as the most desirable means of assisting his *industrious neighbours*, for it was by that appellation, and not as the *poor*, that he was wont to designate the labouring class of his parishioners. None he would say should be called *poor*, who could maintain themselves and their families by their own earnings without assistance from the parish; and he made it his pride, that according to this definition there should be no poor among his flock at Langham.

He was a zealous promoter of all plans of industry, and took infinite pains in instructing the labouring class how to manage their earnings to the best advantage;—a mode of assistance which few people think of giving to them, though it is perhaps of the most valuable kind

that they can receive. He above all things was indefatigable in his endeavours, both by exhortation and by every possible means of encouragement, to prevent their contracting debts, considering the keeping them to habits of regularity in this respect, as one of the most effectual means of establishing good principles and good order among them. Among other incitements to this end, he gave a good dinner of roast beef and plum-pudding every Christmas day to those of his labouring parishioners, their wives and families, who had never contracted a debt during the preceding year, but had paid for every thing at the moment of purchase. He had not been more than four years in the parish when there was not a single family absent from this dinner; so that whereas at first his own kitchen sufficed for the entertainment, he was in the end obliged to borrow the large servants' hall at the squire's for the occasion.

The beneficial effects arising from the attention paid to this point were soon found to be even more extensive than Mr. Armstrong could have flattered himself, though he always expected its influence to be very great. No money was now squandered in the parish in idleness or drinking at the alehouse, it was all reserved to answer the necessary calls upon it, so

that in the end the publican was obliged to give up his license for want of custom. Instead therefore of continuing to follow a trade which commonly terminates in cutting short the days of its followers, as well as in injuring both the health and morals of their neighbours, he now lived like the rest of the parish upon the fruits of his honest industry.

Not that the curate by any means discouraged cheerfulness among his flock, or wished to deprive them of such recreations as were consistent with decorum and suited to their situations. It was no part of his creed that their religion required them to be gloomy, or that cheerfulness was inconsistent with the Christian character; on the contrary, he inculcated that it was an essential part of it. But he taught them to discriminate between those recreations that were proper for a religious person to partake in and those that were not; and while he promoted those that could contribute towards maintaining a cheerful disposition among them, without infringing on the laws of religion and morality, he equally discouraged any that would take them away improperly from the labours necessary for the support of their families:—he was the director alike of their hours of relaxation, of the course of their industry,

and of the meditations of their more serious moments.

In any difficulty he encouraged them to come to him as their adviser, and had always a stock of medicines by him to dispense to them when sick. He promoted reading among them, and while he attended assiduously to a school which had been endowed by the squire for the education of the children, to see that the duty of the master was faithfully discharged, and that it was otherwise properly regulated, he directed the studies of his parishioners in their maturer years to such books as were suited to their stations, by enforcing a religious and moral conduct under a cheerful and pleasing aspect. He formed at the rectory a parish library, as he called it, consisting of a collection of such books as he thought best suited to their capacities and most proper for them to read. These he lent out to them; but he was very exact in having them returned when read, inculcating strongly upon them that a sacred regard ought always to be had to returning duly whatever was borrowed;—the not doing so designedly was nothing better than stealing, and the omitting it through negligence showed at least no delicate feelings on the score of honesty. What he meant to give, he gave at

once,—what he lent, he always required strictly to be returned; and if he laid out money for them at their own desire, he was rigidly exact in its being paid to the utmost penny. Any relaxation on this point he would have considered as encouraging them to ask things of him in an indirect way, and he particularly wished to discourage every thing like underhand proceedings, and to enforce frankness and openness in all their dealings.

These are but some among the numberless minutiæ of morals to which he was strictly attentive, and are rather given as specimens than as a complete sketch of the objects which he regarded it as no less incumbent on a minister to attend to among his parishioners, than to watch over the more important features of their moral conduct. His cares were rewarded as they deserved to be, by acquiring him the universal respect and esteem of them all, farmers as well as labourers;—for the former in being released from the burden of the poor-rates, and in having a sober, regular, orderly race of servants trained for them, were no less benefited by his exertions than the latter. But no one seemed to have a deeper sense of obligation for what was done, than Mr. Conway, the squire of the parish, who was also patron of the living. Every possible assistance was given by

him, both with his purse and his personal countenance, to promote the laudable purposes of the curate. He had himself avocations which left him little leisure for retirement, so that he was seldom down at Langham for more than three months in the year; but at these times he always accompanied him in a round of visits to the houses of all the parishioners, to witness, by the good order and regularity observable in them, the happy effects produced; when he was even lavish in the expression of his gratitude for the solid advantages he himself derived from them. He and Mrs. Conway besides made a point of showing all possible personal attention both to Mr. Armstrong and the young ladies.

Yet there was one thing which the curate still felt to be wanting for the completion of his benevolent purposes. While he was endeavouring to inspire the men with such a spirit of industry as would lead them to seek all possible employment without doors, with how much satisfaction would he have seen his sisters instructing the women in the better regulation of their domestic œconomy! But how were they to instruct others in matters of which they were themselves wholly ignorant? and the nature of their education had been such, that they were totally destitute of any ideas upon these subjects. Sent to a celebrated London board-

ing-school, they had been instructed only in those showy accomplishments which their father conceived would be conducive to the attainment of the sole object he had in view,—that of their getting husbands. They were taught to speak bad French, to dress, to work a little embroidery, to dance, to sing, to play on the piano-forte;—any thing, in short, which would contribute towards catching the eyes and fancies of young men, and nothing else: they would scarcely have been less awkward in setting about building a house, than in attempting to make a shirt or a pudding, or to cast up a sum in an account-book. Indeed, before they could think of attending to things which had any relation to domestic management, even as far as their brother had a right to expect from them in his house, it was necessary that the lofty notions we have seen him combating should be subdued:—a much more arduous conflict then, it is obvious, must of necessity be sustained, before he could reasonably hope to see their attentions extended to the concerns of others; especially when those *others* were their poor neighbours.

Indeed, the first object to be accomplished was to make them fully sensible of their own deficiency; for of that they did not seem the least aware when they came to Langham. It

was only when time united with their brother's precepts and example had somewhat reconciled their minds to the idea of being a mere country parson's sisters, and they began to think with a certain degree of complacency of entering into the details of household œconomy, that they became the least sensible how lamentably defective their education had been in this respect,—how destitute they were of all those useful acquirements which are in reality the most essential things in the formation of the female character. How this was to be corrected, it was no easy matter to determine. As far as their brother could supply the deficiency, he exerted himself to do so; but a man could teach them a very small part of what it was requisite for them to know. However, when the desire of receiving instruction was really and sincerely awakened in their minds, and they applied themselves seriously to devising the means of procuring it, a source presented itself, whence they ultimately derived, at no expense, information, which as they advanced in life they learned to regard as of infinitely more real importance than what had been acquired in their early years at school, at an expense so considerable.

CHAPTER III.

Questions upon visiting investigated with much critical and philosophical acumen.—Decisions and counterdecisions upon this important subject.—Mutual instruction, its pleasures and effects.—Motives for assiduity in study.—An interesting secret penetrated.

LANGHAM was distant only two miles from the town of Ambresbury. A considerable degree of intimacy had always subsisted between Mr. Worledge and Mr. Middleton the minister of Ambresbury; and Mr. Armstrong had been introduced to the latter by Mr. Worledge one morning when he called upon him just before his departure, as the person destined to be his *locum tenens* during his absence. It was naturally therefore to be expected that Mr. Middleton would be one of the earliest visitors to the new curate upon his being established at Langham; but it so happened that he and his wife were then about setting off on a journey into the North upon some business which would occasion their being absent some time. This indeed he announced when he was introduced to Mr. Armstrong, adding, however, that at his return he should take the

first opportunity of calling upon him. He was not then aware that the curate was not coming in the character of a single solitary bachelor,—that he was to find at his return his household increased by the addition of three sisters.

Mr. and Mrs. Middleton had two daughters, who remained at Ambresbury during their absence: consequently, upon their return at the end of four months, these young ladies were very full of the character which even in that short time the Miss Armstrongs had acquired themselves in the neighbourhood, of being so extremely proud and arrogant that their society was almost insupportable. This was faithfully imparted by the Miss Middletons to Papa and Mamma, who thereupon immediately held a solemn council together; in which, after a very able and impartial discussion of the matter, it was determined that they saw no sense in subjecting themselves to be made objects of ridicule and contempt by these silly girls, and that therefore the idea of visiting at Langham should be entirely abandoned. In vain therefore was their promised visit expected by Mr. Armstrong: week after week passed on, yet still he saw them not; till at length he began to suspect what might be the real state of the case, and the idea occasioned him no little vexation and mortification. He had always heard

the Middleton family mentioned as such extremely friendly good kind of people, that he particularly wished for their acquaintance ; but there was no remedy, he must acquiesce in the matter as well as he could ; for it did not belong to him, according to all the etiquettes of visiting, to make any further advances. The Middletons indeed carried their dread of the Miss Armstrongs and their desire of avoiding their society to such a length, that they more than once declined invitations from their neighbours, merely from the apprehension that they might be of the party.

But it was recorded in the book of fate that this distance was not to endure for ever ; and after it had been carried on for a year and half the Middletons were surprised at last into a meeting with these objects of their dread at Mr. Conway's. Here it has already appeared that Mr. Armstrong and his sisters were received in the most friendly manner ; and Mr. and Mrs. Conway being persons of family and fortune, before them the young ladies always forbore to exhibit any of their airs and graces : they sought only to please, and render themselves agreeable ; and this they were extremely capable of doing, when they would condescend to make such an exertion. To see them here therefore would at any moment have been

to see them to great advantage; but by the time this meeting took place, their general behaviour was so much improved, that wherever they had been seen it must have appeared as if the character given them in the country was, if not wholly unjust and unfounded, at least greatly exaggerated. Mr. and Mrs. Middleton were surprised beyond measure at finding their manners so very different from what they had been taught to expect; and since nothing is more painful to a candid mind than the idea of having entertained an ill opinion of others without sufficient cause, they were now, under this impression, disposed to consider them with more favourable eyes than they would have done under any other circumstances; and, as an atonement for their late unfounded prejudices, for such they now conceived them, even to give them credit for good qualities which they did not really possess. At their return home therefore they were full of regret, that they had suffered themselves to be influenced by the idle reports of their neighbours, which they now determined to have originated in a mean jealousy of the superior accomplishments of these young ladies; to which perhaps was joined envy of Miss Armstrong's person, as she was universally allowed to be a very fine woman.

The Miss Armstrongs, on their side, pronounced the Middletons to be really vastly good sort of people, better company indeed than most of the neighbours, and wondered much why they alone of almost all people within a visiting distance had never called upon them. But what more than any thing contributed to changing the distance hitherto maintained between these two families into a close intimacy, was the sentiments mutually awakened, even at this first interview, in the bosoms of Eleanor Armstrong and Sophia, the youngest of the two Miss Middletons. They were just of an age, and that the very age when the mind is most full of enthusiasm, and prone to enter into a hasty and ardent friendship; and there was a something of congeniality in their ideas and dispositions which seemed immediately to attract them towards each other. In a walk taken by the party, they almost imperceptibly to themselves remained always together, and rather separated from the rest of the company, and got into that kind of familiar and unembarrassed exchange of sentiments, that it seemed as if a long intimacy had subsisted between them. What Sophia said, and what Sophia did, were the sole themes of Eleanor's conversation when she returned home; nor could she forbear to express with some eagerness

her deep regrets, that owing to the two families not visiting there was so little chance of a frequent repetition of the pleasure she had just received in her company. Nor was Sophia less eloquent on her side in her admiration of Eleanor, and indignation of the calumnies which had been circulated of her and her sisters.

When two persons, or two groups of persons, are reciprocally inspired with the wish of becoming visiting acquaintance, the means of effecting their purpose is soon devised. The Middletons feeling it rather incumbent on them to make the first advances, since they were sensible that the distance hitherto observed was their seeking, it was not many days before Mr. Middleton determined upon calling at the rectory at Langham, with his apologies that he had not done so long before:—but when Mrs. Middleton and himself returned from the North, the weather was bad, and Mrs. Middleton was really very far from well, so that she was little out for several months, with some other lame excuses, which translated into plain terms signified that they did not then wish for the acquaintance, and that they did wish for it now. To conclude the whole matter, he signified that it was the intention of his wife and daughters, if agreeable, to take an early opportunity of waiting upon the

Miss Armstrongs. Mr. Armstrong expressed himself as much gratified by this intention, and said he was sure that his sisters would be equally so. Thus the ice being broken, the next day Mrs. and the Miss Middletons made their visit in all due form and ceremony. This acquaintance was the more gratifying to Mr. Armstrong, since he had often heard Mrs. Middleton mentioned as an excellent manager in every thing belonging to the female department in a house; and she was universally chronicled in the neighbourhood as having trained up her daughters so well in this respect, that either would be a prize to any man who wanted a good domestic wife. As she was, moreover, represented of an extremely friendly disposition, and ready to do any act of kindness within the compass of her abilities, he thought it not impossible, that from her his sisters might in due time obtain the instruction they so much wanted.

Eleanor and Sophia had now an opportunity of confirming and increasing the partiality which at the first interview they had felt for each other; and Mr. Armstrong's sentiments naturally led to his rather encouraging than attempting to put any restraint upon an intimacy which was evidently so gratifying to both. Thus an enthusiastic friendship was soon awa-

kened between them, which, far from being of a like transient nature with the friendships often contracted between persons of their sex at such a period of life, remained unshaken as long as both parties remained in existence.

It was not long before Eleanor began herself to entertain ideas similar to those which we have seen entertained by Mr. Armstrong, and to think that she might in time be able to avail herself of the intimacy she had thus formed, to get some assistance in attaining an object upon which her mind had long dwelt with some degree of eagerness. Her heart was warm, she deeply felt the kindness of her brother's conduct towards herself and her sisters, and saw that it could not be repaid in any way so grateful to him, as in seeking to acquire those purely feminine accomplishments on which he evidently set so high a value; so that from motives of gratitude to him, no less than from having learned really to think it a duty attached to their situation, she was very desirous of instructing herself on all points relating to the domestic management of a family. Books that treated upon these matters she had studied, but found them very inadequate to the accomplishment of her purpose; that they were of no use to one who had even the first rudiments to learn; that some practical knowledge of the

subjects which they treated was necessary in order to understand the books: and where was that knowledge to be obtained? This had for a while seemed to her an almost invincible stumbling-block in her way, but now new views opened upon her. If, when she was with her young friend, she found that she had been herself instructed in many showy accomplishments of which Sophia was wholly ignorant, yet she equally saw, that in all those domestic occupations where she was herself so lamentably deficient, Sophia was an adept; and while she admired, she wished it were in her power to emulate her talents. Why then not seek to do so?—Sophia was so good-tempered and obliging, that she would surely be very ready to impart her knowledge; at least the experiment was worth making.

She began then by asking so many questions concerning these matters, that at length Sophia could not forbear thinking that they must be prompted by something more than mere curiosity, and it occurred to her that they might be asked with a view to instruction; till at length she ventured to offer her assistance, if Eleanor wished to learn such and such things, with which by her questions she seemed unacquainted. This was the thing of all others that Eleanor wished; and they began by her taking lessons in plain work. But these private les-

sons with Sophia had not proceeded far, when the latter suggested that she would be much better instructed by her mother, who alone, she said, had been her instructor, and would, she was sure, with equal pleasure undertake the instruction of her friend. Nothing could be more delightful to Eleanor than such a proposal; and application being made to Mrs. Middleton, she readily confirmed her daughter's engagements. Her instructions to her new pupil were therefore commenced without delay. All was at first conducted with the most profound secrecy, and Eleanor made a progress in her new acquirements beyond her most sanguine hopes. Mr. Armstrong saw that she was more intimate than ever with the Middleton family, but he saw it with pleasure, always hoping that it might lead ultimately to the realization of his wishes, yet never dreaming of the progress already made towards it. At length one evening on her return from spending the day at Ambresbury, Eleanor brought in one hand a shirt, and in the other a cake, with which she presented him, assuring him that they were both entirely of her own making.

The offerings were received by Mr. Armstrong with a glow of satisfaction and animation in his countenance, which spoke much more forcibly than even the warm expressions

of approbation he lavished upon her, how welcome was the tribute she had brought. Indeed the gratification he derived from his presents seemed so great, so sincere, that it made a more powerful impression upon the other sisters than had ever been produced by his advice and admonitions: they felt besides somewhat ashamed at this reversion of the order of things, and could not help inwardly acknowledging to themselves, that while they ought to have set the example to their younger sister, she was in fact setting the example to them. The eldest in particular was so struck, that while she saw her brother in the fulness of his heart by an almost involuntary movement catch Eleanor in his arms and kiss her with a lively emotion like that of paternal affection, she burst into tears and was obliged to leave the room. Mr. Armstrong observing her thus affected thought the moment favourable, and following her into another apartment, by gentle exhortations and mild remonstrances so completed the revolution which his commendation of Eleanor had begun, that the next day she became a suitor to Mrs. Middleton for permission to share in her sister's lectures. This put the finishing stroke to the second sister's conversion; and in a few days more, she too, at her own request, was admitted to enter on her

noviciate. This was somewhat more than two years after they had been settled at Langham.

Such an act of real friendship in Mrs. Middleton, and the very gratifying change which in consequence of it Mr. Armstrong soon found in the management of his domestic affairs, awakened in his mind a deep sense of the obligations which he owed her, and soon excited in him the commendable desire of finding some more solid mode of evincing his gratitude, than the eloquent language in which he was daily expressing it. After much reflection he thought that there could scarcely be a more appropriate return devised, than to propose taking upon himself the instruction of her daughters in some of those ornamental accomplishments which they had not hitherto had any opportunity of acquiring. These he thought might enlarge their sphere of amusement, without intrenching upon the more important branches of female attainment, to which their education had as yet been confined. He was the rather induced to make this offer, since he perceived that Mr. and Mrs. Middleton, though very worthy excellent people, had not the means within themselves of instructing their daughters in any thing beyond the useful branches of knowledge; they were incapable of instructing them in many things desirable to be acquired as arts which adorn life,

without being in any way inconsistent with the strictest moral purity.

Mr. Middleton was not originally designed for the church, but for trade, and his early education had consequently run in a channel very different from that into which his pursuits were afterwards to be turned. He went late in life to college; and to make up for his deficiency in the knowledge which is expected even in an incipient there, he was obliged to devote all his time to the studies necessary for obtaining a creditable degree, and afterwards for qualifying himself as a candidate for orders;—he had no time to spare for the acquisition of polite literature, or any other attainments irrelevant to these objects. Mrs. Middleton's education had been confined so entirely to the idea of making her a notable good housewife, that had it not been for a naturally excellent understanding, which taught her as it were intuitively the manners of a gentlewoman, even to those manners she would have been a stranger:—how much more then must she necessarily have been precluded from the merely ornamental acquirements of that station! A hint which dropped one day from Eleanor that Sophia wished she understood French, first suggested to Mr. Armstrong the idea of taking the Miss Middletons under his tuition; and he was so much pleased with

the prospect of being able to repay obligations which he so deeply felt, that he lost no time in mentioning the subject. The offer was accepted for Sophia with a profusion of thanks, but declined for her eldest sister; she had long been engaged to a clergyman who had just got a living, and was now so soon to be married, that her becoming Mr. Armstrong's pupil was out of the question.

In Mr. Armstrong the new office he had taken upon himself was attended with no other consequences than the pleasure his benevolent mind found in contributing towards the improvement of an amiable girl, and the satisfaction of thinking that he was discharging a debt of gratitude. Besides being an elegant classical scholar, he was master of the French and Italian languages, and had a considerable knowledge of the German, the Spanish, and the Portuguese. He was a proficient in drawing, and had a partial knowledge of music, enough to derive much amusement from it, though he had not studied it deeply as a science. What knowledge he had in it he now imparted to Sophia Middleton, and instructed her in drawing and in French, purposing, if she should show a taste for the acquisition of languages, to instruct her at a future period in any other she might wish to attain.

Eleanor, in the warmth of her heart, had often dwelt to Sophia upon the extraordinary kindness that she and her sisters had received from her brother; it was indeed her favourite topic in all their private conversations. What she deeply felt, it was painful to her not sometimes to express; and as she never found any one who seemed to sympathize in her feelings so fully as Sophia did, she was particularly eager to embrace every opportunity of descanting upon the subject with her. The enthusiasm with which she spoke on these occasions, the little less than adoration with which the name of Bernard was always pronounced by her, sunk deep into the heart of Sophia; nor could the latter forbear often dwelling in her mind on the idea, that if so good a brother, what would he be as a husband! Now become his pupil, she had an opportunity of contemplating much more nearly those fine qualities with the representation of which her bosom had been so deeply impressed,—when, far from finding the reality fall short of the picture formed in her imagination, she was rather disposed to think that even Eleanor had not done her brother justice; that it was indeed scarcely possible for any description to give an adequate idea of the perfection to be found in the original. Thus by degrees a flame was kindled in her bosom, of

which for a considerable time she was scarcely aware herself, yet which at length she found it impossible not secretly to confess. This was a lesson with which it was no part of the worthy curate's intention to store the mind of his pupil. Yet though no longer able to disguise to herself the state of her heart, she was resolved, if possible, that the secret should not be known further; nay the more ardently she experienced the flame, the more anxious did she become to keep it concealed.

Nothing could exceed her assiduity in prosecuting her studies; to obtain a word of commendation from her instructor was the highest pleasure she could receive; she placed her whole happiness in meriting his approbation. He saw with the utmost satisfaction the progress she made, and, finding the soil so tractable, had a double gratification in having thought of undertaking its cultivation. But he saw only the effect, nor thought of any thing further; or, if he thought of tracing the effect up to a cause, he found that cause merely in a generally amiable disposition, he never perceived that the great moving principle of all was anxiety to be approved by him. The daily kindness which she now experienced from him, added to the witnessing how every personal consideration with regard to himself was sacri-

ficed to his endeavours to make his sisters rationally happy, afforded her such constantly increasing subjects of admiration, that, however strongly she felt her heart interested, her reason confirmed her feelings, and assured her that her heart was not leading her astray. Since inclination then was sanctioned by reason, no possible objection appeared against giving way to it, or cherishing a passion which every thing concurred to assure her was a laudable one:—far therefore from having any idea of repressing, she constantly encouraged it, till at length her heart might truly be said to be wholly absorbed by it.

From the nature of Mr. Armstrong's situation, however, at the commencement of this attachment, it was impossible for her to entertain the least idea of its leading immediately to any further consequences, even supposing, what she dared not hope, that sentiments correspondent to her own should ever be awakened in his bosom. His income was then very small; and since the greater part of it arose from his fellowship, which would be lost in the event of his marrying, it was not possible for him to think of encumbering himself with a wife and family under such circumstances, and of this she was perfectly sensible. There was even good reason to suppose that if

this obstacle should be removed, by the acquisition of preferment which would enable him to marry, another remained, which would prove almost insurmountable;—this was, the manner in which he had devoted himself to the care and protection of his sisters. To judge from his past conduct, it seemed as if nothing would induce him to change his present condition while they remained unprovided for; and that any increase of income would rather be received by him as the happy means of enlarging their comforts, than of enabling him to seek additional comforts for himself. Sophia indeed persuaded herself that she did not wish to become his wife; if, in order to be so, she must see his sisters less the objects of his kindness and attention;—she even thought that the warmth of her admiration would be abated, if she should find that any thing, though it were attachment to herself, could check that devotion of fraternal affection which rendered him so amiable in her eyes.

But the most fatal consideration of all to her peace of mind was, the impossibility, as it appeared to her, of her passion ever being returned. A ray of hope on this point might have enabled her to bear with fortitude the idea that the period for her happiness being completed was very distant; but, even look-

ing to ever so remote a period, not the smallest ray of hope could she flatter herself was to be discerned. The object of her affections appeared to her as of a nature so superior to her own, that she could not conceive the possibility of his ever condescending so far, as to think of making her the sharer of his heart and fortune. To be his wife seemed a happiness so exalted, that it must be reserved for some peculiarly favoured mortal, and she had not sufficient vanity to think that she had any pretension to being so favoured. Yet to cherish her passion by taking every opportunity of being with the object of it was her sole delight, till by thus feeding it,—and feeding it too without suffering herself to indulge a hope of its being returned,—it began insensibly to prey upon her health.

Sophia was not however altogether so able a dissembler as she flattered herself. If the friends in general by whom she was surrounded remained without suspicion of what was passing in her mind, there was one from whom it could not be concealed, and this was Eleanor. With a heart open to all the kindest affections, the latter possessed great acuteness of penetration, and had plainly discovered, even from its first dawnings, the passion to which her friend's heart was now wholly sur-

rendered. She saw it however without regret, nay even with a secret satisfaction, since she felt that nothing would give her greater pleasure than beholding the two persons who enjoyed of all others the largest share of her affections, united in ties which the merits of both convinced her must be productive of particular happiness. Yet she too was perfectly aware that the prospect of this union, if ever it was to take place, must necessarily be a distant one; since at that time it appeared as if her brother's only chance of preferment was a college living, and for that he might wait many years.

To this idea, however, she could easily reconcile her mind; she was satisfied with the hope that her favourite object might one day be accomplished, and thought that she could wait without repining, the propitious moment for its accomplishment. She never hinted to Sophia that she had discovered her secret; her behaviour remained exactly the same towards her; she talked to her of her brother with the same raptures; and though she found Sophia grow somewhat reserved upon the subject, this appeared a not unnatural result of her feelings.

But when she saw her health evidently begin to suffer from the state of her mind, this

opened to her a source of the most poignant uneasiness. Then was first awakened in her bosom an ardent desire to discover her brother's real sentiments with regard to her friend; and if she had reason to think them correspondent to her wishes, she thought that she might venture to give him such hints as would lead to an explanation on his part, sufficient to tranquillize Sophia's mind, from the assurance that it was unpropitious circumstances alone which at present kept her happiness in suspense, and that, these removed, it might at length be completed. But in this experiment Eleanor met with no encouragement to proceed: when studiously talking of Sophia to her brother, with a view to collecting his sentiments, by the manner in which he mentioned her, not a glimmering of reason appeared to think that he had the slightest perception of the passion he had inspired, or had any feelings in his own bosom responsive to it. Thus, though keenly sensible to the ravages it was making on her friend's health, she found herself, for the present at least, compelled to observe this painful effect in profound silence.

CHAPTER IV.

A singular manner of bestowing preferment.—The extreme anxiety of a sister to promote a brother's happiness.—Exemplification of the maxim that "PITY MELTS THE SOUL TO LOVE."—*Two couple made happy.*

MR. ARMSTRONG had now been six years curate of Langham. All this time Mr. Worledge had remained in France, still accompanied by Mr. Anderson, his health continuing so indifferent that he was advised by no means to quit that mild climate, or think of returning to England. At length, despairing of any material amendment, and desirous at least to die in his own country, he resolved to take his chance of suffering or not by it, and return at all events. He accordingly set out on his journey, but by the time he arrived at Dieppe was so much worse, that Mr. Anderson would fain have persuaded him not to attempt the passage immediately, fearing indeed that he might not live through it. But he would not hear of any delay, and was carried almost dying on board the vessel. He just lived to breathe his last, as he wished, in England, but expired about two hours after he had landed at Portsmouth.

Mr. Conway was at this time down at Langham, and no sooner heard of the rector's death, than he waited upon Mr. Armstrong to announce that he intended him as his successor. In this he said he did not by any means consider himself as conferring a favour, but rather as paying a debt of gratitude for all the pains the curate had taken to establish good order and regularity in the parish; he might even in some degree call it an act of selfishness, since it would have given him pain indeed to see the cure pass into other hands.

Never did any promotion give more universal satisfaction,—there was scarcely a single parishioner who would not have regretted the loss of their pastor, as much as Mr. Conway himself, and who was not even eloquent in his expressions of joy on finding that he was to remain among them. It was agreed on all hands that the disposal of the living did equal honour to the promoter and the promoted.

Mr. Worledge had received from his friends in England such excellent reports of the conduct of his deputy, that as a testimony of the sense he entertained of his services, and perhaps thinking it not improbable that he might be his successor, he bequeathed him the whole and entire property which he had left upon the premises of the rectory at his departure. As

to every thing, therefore, but the very agreeable alteration in his income, Mr. Armstrong remained exactly in the same situation as before. Mr. Worledge having desired to be buried at Langham, he was accordingly brought thither, Mr. Anderson accompanying the funeral. The latter stayed ten days at the rectory, and then proceeded to Ludlow, the residence of his mother, who was still alive, and with whom he usually resided when he was not in college. Mr. Armstrong would fain have persuaded him to prolong his stay; but he expressed a great wish not to delay seeing his mother after so long an absence, and urged that besides he had many affairs to settle, he being left executor and principal heir to his cousin.

Though to every individual of the Armstrong family the promotion of the curate was a source of great joy, to none of them, not even to the new rector himself, did it give sensations of such exquisite delight as to Eleanor. Hope seemed now once more to beam upon her,—to flatter her with the prospect that, one powerful obstacle to her brother's marrying being removed, her friend, her poor Sophia, might still be happy;—she could scarcely persuade herself that her brother's blindness could continue for ever, but that he

must at length see how strongly Sophia was attached to him, and that if not love, compassion at least, would determine him to heal the wounds he had so undesignedly inflicted.

Still however time rolled on, and she saw no symptoms of any advances on the part of Mr. Armstrong to this union; her sisters and herself seemed still the sole objects of his cares and attentions;—to render his increase of income subservient to the promotion of their happiness seemed to be the only pleasure he derived from it;—for as to his own personal expenses, they were still restrained within the same moderate bounds as before. Her wishes sometimes rather inclined her to hope that he appeared not altogether insensible to the situation of her friend, nay even that he was himself inspired with corresponding sentiments; yet at other times, when she reflected more coolly upon the subject, she was convinced that her hopes were entirely fallacious. He always behaved to Sophia with the utmost cordiality of kindness; but it was a kindness much rather like that fraternal affection which she herself experienced from him, than bearing any resemblance to the distant admiration and timidity which mark the advances of a lover. His maintaining a certain degree of distance and reserve in his behaviour towards her

would have been far more satisfactory; would have given her much greater hopes of seeing them one day as closely united as she wished.

The state of Sophia's health in the mean time gave her every day increased subject of alarm; nor was it the least part of her uneasiness that it was very evident she was herself the only person among all who surrounded her, by whom this alarm was felt. Sometimes she observed to her brother that she was uneasy about her friend, and feared that she was in a declining state of health; but Mr. Armstrong only replied, that indeed he thought she was grown thinner of late, but that the health of young people was fluctuating, and he trusted there was no cause for serious apprehension on her account. This coldness sunk into the heart of Eleanor;—she would fain have seen him shocked at the most distant idea of alarm for Sophia's safety;—she had flattered herself that such a hint would have been sufficient,—that he would immediately have been anxious to investigate the cause of this change, and no less anxious to remove it when known.

Once she remarked to Mrs. Middleton, that she thought Sophia very much altered within a short time, and expressed serious apprehensions of her going into a decline. The anxi-

ous mother instantly caught the alarm, and began inquiring minutely into the state of her daughter's health: but as Sophia dreaded nothing so much as her secret being known, she positively denied any indisposition; and Mrs. Middleton, who was past the time of life when the perceptions are very quick to such a malady as her daughter's, was satisfied with this assurance, and believed Eleanor's alarms to be groundless:—this she told Eleanor, the next time she saw her, with an air of great satisfaction;—but to her, Sophia's assertion was not equally satisfactory.

Things went on in this situation for nearly three years after Mr. Armstrong became rector of Langham;—but two events which then took place within six months of each other, once more awakened hopes in the mind of Eleanor. These were, the marriage of her eldest sister, and the death of the second. The former was united to a respectable attorney at Warwick, of the name of Shelburne, with whom she had become acquainted on his being for awhile frequently backwards and forwards at Langham, negotiating an exchange of property between Mr. Conway and a gentleman near Warwick. It was barely half a year after this marriage, that the second sister was seized with a violent fever which carried her off in a

few days. Thus Eleanor remained the sole inmate of her brother.

These obstacles to his marrying removed, she felt the crisis of her friend's fate to be arrived; that if foiled in the hope of seeing her now united to her brother, all hope of it must be for ever relinquished. Sophia had constantly forborne to mention the subject, but Eleanor wanted no information to be sure that she was not in an error. Yet still she hesitated;—still hope to see her brother of himself evince the dispositions she wished, withheld her from speaking: she was, however, resolved to speak at length, if she found no other resource remain;—she was resolved to make even this painful effort, rather than see so amiable a creature sink into the grave without doing all in her power to save her.

But what at last determined her to open her heart to her brother was, the reports which had long prevailed in the neighbourhood, though they were but recently known to her, that an actual engagement subsisted between him and Sophia, and that the only reason why their marriage had not yet taken place was, that he did not know how to dispose of his sisters. To the good gossips of the country it seemed absolutely impossible that a pretty young girl could receive the notice Sophia re-

ceived from him, without something more being intended :—indeed the pains he had been taking to improve her mind and give her those elegant accomplishments in which he found her deficient, could be only with the intention of forming her as a wife after his own ideas. To some, the very sociable terms on which she was received at Mr. Armstrong's was even a matter of scandal, and she was condemned as wanting in the reserve becoming to a young woman, that she could go so continually to the house of an unmarried man : this was scarcely admissible even supposing him a lover, and wholly inexcusable if he was not. A few laid the whole blame upon Mr. Armstrong, and said that he was trifling very improperly with the character of an amiable girl, and placing her in a situation which might lead people to doubt the purity of his intentions :—indeed, if his general character had not been so high in the world, his conduct in this instance would certainly have brought scandal both upon himself and the young lady.

These reports, with the strictures upon them, wounded Eleanor to the soul :—it was impossible not to see with very painful feelings the characters of two persons so dear to her, in danger of suffering from an intimacy of which she was herself in great measure the

cause, and which, if it was not to go further, ought never, as it appeared, to have gone so far:—she was even more hurt, if possible, by the injury done to the reputation of her friend, in making it at all a subject of animadversion, than at the ravages the affair had made in her health. From all these considerations, she at last persuaded herself, that friendship for both demanded of her to keep silence no longer; for that, if a more intimate connection was not to take place, it was necessary that a greater distance should from that time be preserved. The least injury that would accrue to Sophia from things remaining in their present state would be, that any other person who might otherwise think of becoming a suitor to her would be effectually precluded from it.

Accordingly, one day when she thought the opportunity favourable, summoning all her courage to her aid, she laid open at large to her brother the mighty secret which had been so long labouring in her bosom. She assured him, that having accurately observed her friend for a long time, she was convinced that an attachment to him, which it was not in her power to resist, had taken possession of her bosom; that it was slowly undermining her health, and that she must soon become a victim to it, unless the cause of her uneasiness

was removed. She did not fail too to hint obliquely at the reports prevalent in the neighbourhood, and the injury which might ultimately arise from them both to himself and her friend.

This disclosure overpowered Mr. Armstrong with such a mixture of concern and astonishment, that he was for some moments unable to speak. When these feelings were a little subsided, he observed to Eleanor that she could scarcely have imparted any intelligence by which he felt himself so deeply affected. "I have a high value, believe me," said he, "for your friend; and, next to seeing you happily settled in the world, few things would give me more pleasure than to see her so; but nothing was ever further from my thoughts than to enter into the connection with her at which you hint. As an amiable and excellent young woman, the intimate friend of my favourite sister, I have regarded her almost as my own sister, but never had an idea of regarding her in any other light. Oh Eleanor! words can ill—— but tell me, How came you so well acquainted with your friend's sentiments? Has she ever disclosed them to you?"

"Never! and I believe would sooner have died than have disclosed them. But I have

watched her narrowly, and am well convinced of the truth of what I have told you."

"Eleanor! Eleanor!—you—you know not how much you have distressed me!" He could say no more, but rose up hastily and left the room.

Never was astonishment greater than Eleanor's on witnessing the effect produced by the step she had taken,—the very imprudent step, as she now considered it,—nor ever was distress much more poignant than what she felt, in reflecting that while her sole idea was to promote the happiness of her brother, and her friend, to the former at least she seemed only to have opened a source of heart-rending anguish. But the thing was past, and could not now be recalled; she could only rest in the hope, that though she had occasioned her brother a momentary conflict, yet that, this conflict past, the result might lead to his permanent happiness;—for never could she divest herself of the idea, that the union of two such perfect beings as she considered her brother and Sophia, must be essentially conducive to the happiness of both.

As she sat absorbed in reflection on what had passed, sometimes reproaching herself with ingratitude towards her brother, in having been

the cause of a single moment's uneasiness to him, then again satisfying herself that she could not have stood acquitted towards friendship if she had acted otherwise, a new idea was awakened in her mind.

Besides his two daughters, Mr. Middleton had a son who was clerk in one of the principal banking-houses in London. In the visits which this young man occasionally made to his parents, he had of course become acquainted with Eleanor;—he had even shown her very marked attention, and Sophia had often told her that she was a great favourite with her brother. He was at this moment at Ambresbury, having been recently promoted to be first clerk in the house where he was established, with a considerable addition of salary sufficient to enable him to think of marrying and settling. Eleanor had seen him but once since he came down; but she recollected that his behaviour to her was even more particular than before; and in reflecting upon the whole matter, there seemed good reason to suppose that he would not quit the country without explicitly declaring his mind to her. Hitherto she had thought little upon this subject; she knew that he had not the means of marrying, and she scarcely had an idea of asking herself whether she liked him or not: she had neither encouraged nor re-

pelled his advances. Her attachment to her brother, and her friend, occupied her heart entirely; there hardly seemed a vacancy in it to admit of any other.

But in searching for the cause of that agitation in which she had seen her brother upon being informed of Sophia's attachment to him, she could find no other except his kind consideration for her;—it was his unwillingness alone to engage in any connection which might interfere with his devotion to her, that made him start at the idea of marriage.—Well then, she hoped that this sole objection to what she had proposed might soon be obviated:—she hoped that she might be otherwise provided for; and for the first time she began to consider whether she could like Lawrence Middleton as a husband.

She was in the midst of this train of reflection, when Lawrence actually arrived for the purpose of making the declaration of his sentiments, which she suspected he meditated. He could not have appeared at a moment more favourable for the success of his proposals; he could never have found the object to whom his suit was to be preferred, so predisposed to grant without hesitation any suit of the kind. Eleanor's mind was so full of the idea that she was an obstacle to the happiness of her brother,

and her friend, that she was ready to embrace with eagerness an offer which would remove her out of the way of being so any longer :—she was ready to do any thing which would obviate, as she conceived, every objection to the union on which her heart was so much bent. She did not therefore even request her lover to allow her any time for consideration, or for consulting her brother, before his doom was to be pronounced ; she signified, at the first starting of the question, her most cordial acceptance of the hand and heart he offered; and before they separated, every thing was arranged between them for the speedy conclusion of their marriage.

Her mind had been so entirely occupied by this subject during her interview with Lawrence, that she never perceived the length of time which had elapsed since her brother quitted her so abruptly, nor had an idea that he had been absent three hours. She now thought only of the welcome news she should have to impart at his return, and became impatient for it, well assured that she should be able to calm in a manner most grateful to him the agitation she had occasioned. It was not long before her impatience was gratified, by seeing him reenter. Where he had been during the last three hours, or what had been passing in his mind, he did

not disclose: Eleanor could only conjecture from the result the subject of his meditations: she only knew for certain, that he had not only been absent from the room, but from the house, during the whole time.

He entered, however, with a much more tranquil appearance than he had departed. His features had resumed that benignity and mild composure which was their peculiar characteristic, and no one who then regarded them, could have supposed that so short a time before they had displayed every symptom of the most cruel agitation. "My dear Eleanor," he said, "will you be the bearer of a suit to your friend, which but for your interference I should never have thought of preferring? If it be true, as you assure me, that she is suffering grievously from an attachment unreturned, my path of duty seems plain and obvious. But since the proposals I have to make coming suddenly upon her might overpower and prove fatal to her, she had perhaps better be prepared before I speak to her myself. Use your discretion then in communicating the matter to her in such a way that it may not produce an effect the very opposite to what I intend.—My Eleanor, I feel that this must be so, that it ought to be so: I have perhaps been to blame in encouraging the intimacy which has led to

her entertaining this passion, and I owe her the only reparation that can be made. Yet, Eleanor, I cannot reflect ——" He paused, he seemed to think that he was going to say too much: then looking earnestly at Eleanor for a few minutes;—" But," he continued, " can you, Eleanor, who have hitherto been the first object of all my thoughts, of all my solicitudes,—can you reconcile yourself to the idea of experiencing henceforward only such a portion of them as will be consistent with the superior duties I shall owe to a wife and family? —shall you have no fears of the brother being lost in the husband?"

" Let no such ideas trouble you, my dearest brother," interrupted Eleanor eagerly. She then proceeded to relate what had just passed between Lawrence Middleton and herself, and concluded with saying: " Thus you see, my dear Bernard, that all anxiety on my account is obviated; and the same happiness which I would confer on Sophia, by giving her to the man whom her heart has long in secret adored, I shall experience as the wife of one whom I have every reason to believe worthy of the utmost affection I can show him."

" You have then given a decided answer to Mr. Middleton?—you have given a positive promise to be his?"

"I have indeed, Bernard. But do not condemn me, or think that I have been wanting in the deference which I ought to pay to your opinion, and which I certainly feel for it, that I did not wait to consult with you before my word was irrevocably passed. I own that I have been hasty, perhaps it may be thought rather more so than is consistent even with strict decorum; but my mind was fully decided, my heart pleaded for Lawrence, he was the brother of my friend, and a man of whom I had often heard you express a very favourable opinion. All these things concurring, I really knew not how to affect a hesitation which I did not feel:—besides, I always thought that there was something contemptible in that spirit of coquetry which makes a woman think it necessary to trifle and dally awhile with a lover's passion before she yields to it."

"Eleanor, we shall both marry in haste;—may we neither of us repent at leisure! But hasten to your friend, do not tell her what has passed, only carry her the offer of my hand and all my worldly property."

These last words sunk deep into Eleanor's soul. "*We shall both marry in haste;—may neither repent at leisure!*" Her brother had besides talked only of the path of duty, of making the proper reparation to her friend:—

he had only commissioned her to make Sophia the offer of his *hand and property*, he had said nothing which implied attachment to her, he had made no offer of his *heart*. Would his heart then not accompany his hand ?—this was a cruel reflection. Had she, through her indiscreet zeal, or worse, through her unwarrantable presumption in pretending to be a better judge than himself how his happiness was to be promoted, betrayed him into the cruel situation of taking a wife only from compassion, not from affection? These ideas so harassed her mind as she walked towards Ambresbury for the purpose of executing her brother's commission, that she had more than once nearly resolved not to execute it, persuading herself that the same influence which had been exerted to induce her brother to make the offer, ought now to be employed in engaging him to recall it. Yet when she reflected upon his disposition, upon that tenderness and kindness of heart which felt so deeply for every species of suffering among his fellow-creatures, and was always anxious if possible to relieve it,—when she applied this general disposition to the particular case in question, and considered that he must regard himself as the author of Sophia's sufferings, and the step he was taking as the only one by which they were to be allayed ;—

when she reflected on these things, she felt assured that he would now make it a point of conscience to offer his hand to Sophia, nor would be deterred from it by any arguments that she could urge;—that therefore it were useless for her to hesitate in carrying the proposals to her friend, since if she refused to be the bearer of them they would undoubtedly be sent through some other channel.

Yet her mind was wrought up to such a state of agitation by the time she arrived at Ambresbury, that she could not speak to Sophia herself, she was forced to employ an intermediate agent: and as she had arrived at the vicarage unknown to her friend, she imparted her errand to Mrs. Middleton, leaving her to communicate the joyful tidings to her daughter: she even quitted the house without its being known to any one but Mrs. Middleton that she had been there.

The next day the overjoyed mother arrived very early at Langham to report the event of her mission. It was what might be expected, that Sophia was at first nearly overcome with the prospect of happiness so unhoped for, but was now composed, and ready to receive Mr. Armstrong with transport and affection as her future husband.

To Sophia this change in her prospects was

happiness unallayed. To Eleanor, the situation both of herself and her brother was far from communicating equal sensations of unmingled delight. The prospect of rendering an important service to her brother had induced her to accept Lawrence Middleton's offers without hesitation, or pausing a moment to investigate the real sentiments of her heart towards him. Her mind was then in such a state as to be incapable of admitting any ideas unconnected with the leading object by which it was occupied; and in the eagerness with which she acceded to his proposals, she never considered them in any other point of view than as they had a reference to relieving her brother from a charge now become burdensome to him. Possibly, if the effect with regard to him had been such as she flattered herself, in her satisfaction at having attained this object, no considerations originating in her own feelings would have intervened to damp her joy, or throw a gloom over her future prospects. But the sacrifice which seemed sweet while her brother's happiness was, as she conceived, to be promoted by it, assumed a very different aspect when her mistake was made manifest; and it appeared that she had rather been doing him an injury than rendering him a service.

Thus the merits of Lawrence, who, under

the first impressions which accompanied her acceptance of his proposals, appeared every thing she could wish in a husband, were now more severely scrutinized. She recollected that when first there appeared reason to suspect his attachment to her, she had asked herself whether he was one whom she thought she could love—to whom she could think with pleasure of uniting herself,—and the result had been, that she thought she could not;—that while she saw in him many good qualities to which she could not refuse her respect and esteem, there was yet a something, she could not tell what, that it seemed as if respect and esteem were all that she ever could feel for him:—if she had not therefore positively discouraged him when he seemed endeavouring to recommend himself to her favour, she had yet avoided giving him encouragement. She even thought, in reflecting upon his manner when he made his proposals, that it was with a diffidence which evinced no sanguine hopes of success; and that he seemed rather surprised, and for a moment even almost confounded, at the readiness with which they were accepted; that he was more prepared to have found them rejected.

But then it might be asked, whether she could give a good reason for her indifference

to Lawrence? and this she was forced to confess to herself she could not. She thought, therefore, she had been to blame in regarding his attachment with so much coldness; that, considering her own situation, it was perhaps as good a match as she had any reason to expect, and in this point of view, therefore, not to be rejected. Then Sophia had always spoken of him as a very kind brother, and his parents as a very good son; there was therefore sufficient reason to hope that he would make a good husband:—so that, on the summing up of the whole, she pronounced her former decision in his disfavour wrong, and the contrary determination, which she had now made, right.

Still there was another thing which must be considered, and this was, whether in fact it was strictly honourable in a woman to marry a man with the indifference which she could not disguise to herself she felt for Lawrence. Yet as she had no positive dislike to him, she thought some allowance might be made for her very peculiar situation, and that the deed might be excused for the motive's sake. Besides, she was resolved faithfully to fulfil the duties of a wife, and never by her conduct to give her husband reason to suspect that he was not beloved by her. Indeed, since her heart was free, since she had no other attachment, and respected

him highly, it seemed not unreasonable to hope, nor was the thing improbable, that living constantly with him, the constant object of his affectionate attention, she should finally, from habit, love him very sincerely. Thus were her scruples on this head laid asleep, and a negative put upon the question sometimes started in her mind, whether she ought to proceed in this business, and was not rather bound in honour to Lawrence himself, to lay open her heart to him, and entreat him to release her from her promise, since love had no share in her giving it;—and after well weighing the matter, she determined to fulfil her engagement.

The two weddings were fixed to take place on the same day at Ambresbury, the ceremony in both instances being performed by Mr. Middleton, and the brides being given away by their respective brothers. Of the four persons who were on this occasion *made happy*, according to the usual phraseology, it was probable that Sophia was the only one who tasted pure unmixed felicity. Mr. Armstrong could not help feeling that the act he was performing was prompted by compassion alone; and though in poetry it sounds well to say that

"Pity melts the soul to love,"

yet his conscious bosom rejected the plausible fiction, too deeply impressed with this sad re-

ality,—that the passion which is founded on pity alone, leaves a listless vacuum in the heart, and that something more is requisite to compose that feeling from which alone true wedded happiness can result,—the feeling that the object to whom our faith is plighted is all in all to us. Eleanor's sensations could as little be those of bliss without allay:—entertaining only the hope that she should at last love her husband, not feeling that she actually did love him, while she tried to convince herself that she was not doing wrong, she yet could not entirely banish the intruder self-reproach from her bosom. And as to Lawrence, he was not without his apprehensions, though he sought to disguise them to himself, that he had been accepted rather because Eleanor wished to be no longer burdensome to her brother, than from strong attachment to him.

The sequel of Sophia's story is soon told: the compassion which was desirous of healing the wounds of her mind, and of restoring by these means her body to health and vigour, was roused too late. Her frame was already injured beyond the possibility of a cure, and in a year and half after her husband led her to the altar he followed her to the grave. She had previously presented him with a son, who was baptized by the name of Walter.

CHAPTER V.

A pedigree.—Ingenious conjecture concerning the origin of the author's family.—Opinions of the author's ancestors for three generations back.—The modern David.—The professions of divinity and physic compared.—Hopes long disappointed at length fulfilled.—The merits of various names discussed.—A promotion and a christening.

And this is what you call writing your own history? Here is a long preamble about the Rev. Mr. Armstrong and his sisters, and Sophia, and nobody knows who, but not even the name of Danville mentioned.—Patience, courteous reader!—it is not good to introduce the hero of the story too soon upon the *tapis;* he comes forth with vastly more importance when expectation has been for some time on the rack for his appearance; and as I wish to present myself before you with every possible advantage, so I have thought it most advisable to remain awhile in the back ground, till you were wound up to the proper pitch of impatience for my coming forward. Besides, as in politeness bound, I judged it proper to give my friend the *pas*; and, though in fact he did not come into the world till a year after me, to let

him be introduced to the reader before me. But having done this, I now advert to myself.

And first, as to my pedigree. I presume, did I but know where to search for it, that I should find it might be traced up to one of the sons of Noah,—most probably to his eldest son Japhet. According to some great investigators of the antiquities of the British isles, it was by the descendants of Magog and Gomer, the sons of Japhet, that these isles were first peopled; and since I have no reason to suppose that I can boast of numbering among my ancestors any of those illustrious personages, who, coming over in the trains of their different conquerors, whether Danish, Saxon, or Norman, founded almost all the distinguished families in the country;—as I have no reason, I say, to suppose myself descended from any of these, 'tis probably among the aborigines of the soil, who have lived on in an uninterrupted obscurity, without their blood being contaminated by foreign alliances, that my ancestors must be sought.

Some persons will, however, insist upon it that our family must be of French extraction, and suppose it to have come over among some of the tribes of refugees that have at different times settled here. This they say is evident from the name; since, though we now write it Danville, it must originally have been written

with an elision, D'Anville, which plainly points to a French origin. This derivation I will not pretend to dispute. Neither will I dispute another, if any one should be roguishly inclined to impute it to us, and say, that if originally written with an elision, it had rather a reference to the profession followed by the family, than to the country whence it came:—deprived of the two last letters, the name would certainly bear such an interpretation.

I am sorry that it is not in my power more fully to elucidate this matter; but since the truth is, that I never heard of any pedigree being preserved in the family, and have little hope of finding one if I should apply at the Herald's office, I must leave speculators to speculate in any way that may best amuse them, and content myself with going no further back than the fourth generation, my great-grandfather being the first of the family respecting whom I have been able to obtain any certain information. It is possible that through him we might claim a very distinguished origin; that he

—fell from heaven, thrown by angry Jove
Sheer o'er the crystal battlements;—from morn
To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve',
A summer's day;—and with the setting sun
Dropt from the zenith like a falling star
On Britain's isle.

MILTON.

It is possible, I say, that he was thus introduced into the island of Great Britain, as the founder of his profession was of old into that of Lemnos: but of this we really have no tradition in the family; we only know that he and my grandfather carried on successively the trade of blacksmiths in the very same parish of Langham of which the reader has already heard so much. They were universally allowed to be excellent workmen in their way, but this was all the distinction that they could boast; we cannot even find that either ever arrived at any parish honours,—the chronicles of the village do not authorize the supposition that they did: —one at least, it may fairly be presumed, was never conferred upon them, the office of constable; since it is well known that they were both strong, able-bodied men, and that office is commonly reserved for such as have some corporeal infirmity. Indeed, during the whole course of their lives they were always heard to deprecate, rather than court, distinction, and to express gratitude to Providence that he had never called them into any situation which would have obliged them to relax in their assiduities at the forge and the anvil.

My father was of a much more aspiring genius. No sooner had he seen the remains of my grandfather quietly deposited in the earth,

and taken possession of his paternal inheritance, being then just twenty-two years of age, than he felt his heart expand at the idea of having become his own master at this early period, and his soul was fired with the ambition of raising his family from the humble station in which it had hitherto moved, if not in his own person, at least in that of his descendants.

As a means of promoting his views, he revolved in his mind the expediency of contracting some great alliance. He was a man of some reading; and in particular had studied the Scriptures, young as he then was, with considerable assiduity; and he found several persons recorded there, as having raised themselves exceedingly in life through the matrimonial connections they had formed. Casting his eyes then around among the young women who he conceived might be within his reach, he first thought of paying his court to one of two daughters of a farmer in the parish. They being coheiresses, it seemed no irrational expectation that at the death of the father the husband of one of the daughters might succeed to the farm; and here would be a great point gained in paving the way to the aggrandisement of the Danville family. But before he had determined which of the two ladies should be honoured with his addresses, or had arranged his plans

for endeavouring to render himself agreeable to either, one of them, unknown to her father, bestowed her hand upon the son of a tradesman in the neighbouring town of Ambresbury; and the other was, with her father's consent, made the happy bride of a young farmer in the parish. Disappointed in this plan, my father next turned his attention to Hannah Gregory, only daughter of the village shopkeeper, whose hand he obtained without difficulty, and with it a fortune of a hundred pounds. This marriage followed so closely on the appointment of Mr. Armstrong to the curacy of Langham, that the solemnization of it was the first piece of professional duty which he performed after his arrival there.

In what way the fortune he received with his wife might be employed to the best advantage, became now an important subject of deliberation with my father, and he soon determined that a part of it, at least, could never be devoted to a better purpose than procuring some instruction in *the great science of physic*, as he expressed himself; that is, he placed himself under the tuition of a celebrated horse and cow doctor at Ambresbury, who was advancing in years, and likely soon to retire from practice. Thus, on his retirement he succeeded, as he planned within himself, to his business, and

added to his profession of making shoes for horses, that of curing them of their ailments.

But his acquisitions did not stop here. There was an itinerant musician, who used frequently in the course of his rambles to stroll into the village of Langham, and through his instruction my father soon acquired a smattering of musical knowledge, of which he was not a little proud. He could make out a tune on the clarinet tolerably well; and having a powerful as well as a not-inharmonious voice, he soon became decidedly the first musical performer in the parish, vocal as well as instrumental. He was therefore a very important personage at the village feasts, particularly at the harvest homes, to all which he was regularly invited; and here his cheerfulness and hilarity of temper, united with his musical talents, rendered him so entertaining a guest, that he was even a greater favourite with the lasses, though a married man, than most of the unmarried youths:—his society was indeed universally courted.

But however gratifying he found this distinction, it was not of a nature sufficient wholly to satisfy his ambition: his bosom soon began to burn with a nobler ardour,—he soon began to aspire at honours of a much higher nature. The clerk of the parish was far advanced in

years: he had always been a very indifferent performer in psalmody, and his voice was now so much broken, that his attempts to sing were almost ludicrous. My father therefore thought of associating together a number of the village youths, and training them as a band to supply his place. This idea, when mentioned to Mr. Armstrong, received from him the warmest encouragement. As the worthy curate was extremely anxious that all parts of the church service should be performed with the utmost solemnity and decorum, and particularly that every thing should be avoided which had the remotest tendency to the burlesque; so this affair of the singing had given him real uneasiness even from his first coming to the parish, and he had frequently revolved in his mind plans for doing more honour to Sternhold and Hopkins. The proposal, therefore, now submitted by my father to his approbation, was not only received without hesitation, but with expressions of the highest satisfaction, and the very next Sunday the band took the station allotted them in the church, and entered upon their new office. In this they acquitted themselves so well, that they soon acquired a high reputation; nor were there, for a great many miles round, any persons that could at all rival them for plain counterpoint, fugue, and anthem;

so that people frequently came even from a considerable distance, to Langham church, for the sake of the singing. This was a distinction not a little gratifying to the leader of the band.

When first my father took to the *study of physic*, for so he was pleased to term the knowledge he had acquired in the veterinary art, he was disposed to consider a physician as the first of all professions, and resolved that it should be that of his eldest son: but afterwards, on acquiring this distinction in the church, he began to think a clergyman a still greater man than even a physician, and, changing his purpose, determined upon educating his eldest son for holy orders.

"A physician," he would say, "is indeed a great man, he teaches you the art of keeping your body in health; but what is that to the clergyman, who teaches you to guide your heart and mind in the right path, who points out the way to rise to immortal glory and happiness in heaven, which that is the greatest thing that a man can possibly do? When he gets into the pulpit, the eyes of the whole congregation are upon him, eager to catch every sentence, every word, that flows from his lips; and to be sure there cannot be any thing more noble than the idea that the attention of such a number of persons at once, is turned to

you alone. There may be professions in which a man may get more money; but what is that to thinking that you are able to teach thousands the proper path to distinction, since we all know that *virtue is the only true nobility?* The physician may be, nay must be, a man of learning; but then nobody sees it, or knows it, except they may happen to want his advice; which then to be sure he may talk them over and show his learning, but 'tis only the rich that can afford to pay them and hear them talk. With the clergyman the case is quite different; every body hears him, every body knows that he is a man of learning;—yes, my eldest son must be a clergyman."

It is probable that the notice which my father always received from Mr. Armstrong, even from the first of his coming to the curacy, contributed not a little to fixing in his mind this strong deference for the clerical profession; and indeed the curate's own character was such, that it was really flattering to any one to be distinguished by him. But my father was a man of an extremely good natural understanding, though sometimes led away into visions bordering on enthusiasm, upon his favourite subject of aggrandising his family. He was besides a perfectly moral and religious man, and his introduction of the new system

of psalmody, so soon after Mr. Armstrong became curate, led almost unavoidably to his noticing him particularly.

Yet, notwithstanding his general enthusiasm for the church, there were moments when he hesitated about the degree of honour to be conferred upon it, in the placing out his children:—this was when, in the course of his medical practice, he had performed some wonderful cure upon a patient, whether horse or cow. At such times he became so exceedingly impressed with the vast importance of the medical science, not only to mankind, but even to the brute creation, that respect for physic would even gain the ascendancy in his mind over reverence for divinity. Then would he expatiate to my mother, with an irresistible flow of eloquence, upon the immense utility a man was of, by devoting himself to the study of physic, and conclude with resolving, spite of what he had said at other times, that his eldest son must be a physician. Yet even then the ambition of seeing a son in the pulpit was not relinquished; and though the eldest was otherwise disposed of, the second should most decidedly be in the church.

All this time, however, there was one obstacle to the realisation of his plans, on which he had never thought of calculating, and this

was, that no child was yet born to him. Year after year passed on, in the vain hope that though the past had not been propitious, another might be more fortunate; but another still succeeded, and left him still in expectation. Yet the formation of his projects was not on this account interrupted, nor could repeated disappointment wholly deprive him of hope. "He knew," he said, "that he must wait God's good time for every thing, which that is what every body must do; and since he was resolved to be a kind father, he could not help thinking that it would please God some time or other to send him children. Even among those distinguished personages in Scripture who had been the most highly favoured by the Lord, it was not till late in life that posterity was granted to some of them, particularly in the instances of Abraham, and Zacharias father of John the Baptist. Each of these had a son born to him after all hope of having children had ceased: and though he was not presumptuous enough to think of sharing a proportionate degree of favour with the Almighty; yet as long as neither he nor his wife were sufficiently advanced in years to preclude the hope of descendants without the intervention of a miracle, he saw no good reason for not cherishing hope." He still

continued, therefore, to frame his projects; and the discussion of them was the general topic of all his tête-â-tête conversations with my mother.

She, though not less ardent in her wishes to be the mother of a child who should in future be a great man, was less sanguine in her hopes, and would sometimes check my father, saying that it was quite useless to form so many schemes;—perhaps his presumption in doing so, was the very reason why it had pleased God to withhold children from them. To this he would reply, that if at last Providence was not pleased to send him a child of his own, he did not doubt but that any of his neighbours who had a large family would willingly spare him one of theirs, whom he could adopt; and since he was not a great man, the child might take the name of Danville without being obliged to ask his majesty's royal license and authority. "And who knows," he would add, "whether he may not one day be made physician to his majesty, and receive the honour of knighthood?—Then he would be called Sir James, or Sir John, or Sir Matthew Danville; which would be great indeed: or, if he should be a clergyman, then he might become a bishop, and be called My lord; which would be still greater. He would wait,"

he said, "till he was forty; and if by that time he had not a child of his own, he would begin to think of adopting one."

But after ten years passed in fruitless expectation, when hope was almost at an end, my mother actually became pregnant, and in due time I, the only fruit of their marriage, came into the world. How many anxious moments respecting the sex of the child did my father pass from the time my mother's pregnancy was certain, till her delivery!—"If, after all," he would sometimes say, "this child should prove a daughter, which that would be very unfortunate indeed, what then could be done?—She could not be either a clergyman or a physician, the family could never be aggrandised through her. It was possible to be sure that she might marry greatly,—she might prove very handsome, and the squire's son might fall in love with her: such things had happened, and might happen again; which that would be a great thing for her, but then the name of Danville would not be aggrandised;—for since she would be elevated by her alliance with the young squire, not the squire by his alliance with her, he could never insist on her husband's taking her name, she must take that of her husband."—On the whole, if the offspring had proved a daughter, I am afraid she would

have met with rather a cold welcome into the world, on the paternal side, at least, however kindly she might have been received by the mother.

But to this trial my father was not put. After some hours spent in a state of anxiety which has perhaps never been exceeded, and not often been equalled, even when a large property depended upon the sex of the infant about to make its appearance; at length, just as the clock struck twelve at noon, one of the gossips of the village, who was in attendance above stairs, descended, with a countenance fully expressive of the joyful tidings she had to communicate, and congratulated him upon the birth of a very fine boy. The first burst of transport at this happy event had but just begun to subside, when, as if to render his happiness as complete as possible, another succeeded scarcely less transporting. A rap was heard at the door of his house; which being opened, the rector presented himself before him, to announce that he had made choice of him as successor to the clerk of the parish, who had only two days before paid the great debt of nature. To find himself the father of a very fine and promising boy, in whom probably he then beheld nothing less than a future archbishop of Canterbury, while at the same

moment he was himself raised to so high a distinction in the parish, was such a tide of transport, that, quite overpowered, he could scarcely make due acknowledgements to the rector for the favour conferred upon him; but stammering out a few incoherent words, he ended by falling upon his knees, and fervently praying that heaven would enable him to bear with moderation and equanimity of temper such a vast accession of good fortune.

He now considered himself as very decidedly the third person in the parish; there could be only two superior to himself, the squire and the rector. Between these two he could never positively decide to which the priority of rank ought to be assigned: the squire, as the great landholder, it could not be denied, had no slight claim to be considered as the first person; but so profound was my father's respect for the church, that he could hardly allow even the squire to be a greater man than the rector. Yet, whichever way this question might be decided, of his own rank there could be no doubt:—if the clergyman in his pulpit and desk was a person of such immense importance, he could not consider the clerk, whose office it was to echo with an Amen all the fine things he uttered, as any other than a humble participator in his greatness. If he

regarded the minister as the sun which diffuses light and radiance all around,—as the meteor to whom his flock ought to look up as the first object of their respect among created things,—he could not consider the clerk as any thing less than the moon shining with his borrowed light. Judge then what must have been his transport on finding himself beaming with the effulgence of this subordinate luminary, while he had at the same time a son born whom he hoped to see one day adorned with all the lustre of the superior one!

A very important point now came into deliberation, and that was by what name I should be called. It was one of my father's axioms, that every person destined to the service of the church, or in any way connected with the church, should have a Scripture name, though he was not particular whether it should be taken from the Old or New Testament. Since then, in consequence of his closer connection with the church from the new honours conferred upon him, I was irrevocably destined to the clerical profession, it was beyond all dispute that I must have a Scripture name: the only difficulty was to determine, among the number that presented themselves to his choice, which it should be.

At first he thought of naming me after one

of the Evangelists, and among them he preferred Luke to the others, because he considered that saint as the greatest of the four, since he had not only written one of the Gospels, but also the Acts of the Apostles. He was besides a physician; and should any thing occur hereafter to make him alter his mind, and not educate me to the church, though he could scarcely conceive that to be possible, yet if it should so happen, as I should then certainly be devoted to the study of physic, my name would still be appropriate to my profession. Sometimes he was more disposed to Paul, since he was so celebrated a preacher, and considering the number of Epistles written by him, he must be acknowledged a scarcely less voluminous writer than Saint Luke. James had also his moments of preference, because the Epistle of James was one of my father's most favourite portions of the sacred writings. Though a very religious man, he was no enthusiast,—he considered faith without works as wholly unavailing, and was consequently a great disciple of the apostle who contends so strenuously for works, and for the inefficiency of faith alone, independent of them.

At other times he was altogether for recurring to the Old Testament, and baptizing me after some of the great Hebrew priests or pro-

phets. Daniel was a character he particularly admired; and as he had escaped in safety from the lions' den, so he hoped his son might pass in safety through the snares and temptations of the world, of which the lions might not improperly be considered as a type. His love of psalmody inclined him frequently towards David;—then he thought of Abraham, as he intended me to be the founder of a great family. At length all these were rejected, and the name of Samuel, for several important reasons, was determined on. In the first place, I was born after many years of unfruitful marriage;—in the next place, I was destined, like Samuel, to minister at the altar of the Lord;—in the third place, as Samuel became high priest of the Jews, so he hoped that I should rise to the highest honours in the Christian church;—and lastly, my mother's name was Hannah, which seemed to point out that of Samuel as particularly appropriate for her son. It was totally out of the question to give me his own name, since he had the misfortune to be called Robert, a name nowhere to be found in Scripture.

My mother had sometimes suggested giving me three or four names, that I might have the better chance of following some one or other of the great men after whom I should be call-

ed :—besides, she said, it was quite the fashion to have several names, your great folks always have three or four at least. To this my father positively refused his assent. As to fashion, he said, he did not care a rush for it in comparison with Scripture; and as to great men having always several names, that was quite a mistake, for he could cite a hundred archbishops and bishops, aye, and a great many learned physicians too, who had only one. But what was more than all, he did not recollect a single instance where the servants of the Lord mentioned in the sacred writings, whether priest or prophet, whether apostle or evangelist, had above one name, and it was therefore peremptorily resolved that the same rule should be observed in baptizing his son. I was accordingly baptized by the name of Samuel, and by that name only, two days after my birth.

My baptism took place at this early period, because it was my father's earnest wish that his own entrance upon his new office should be distinguished by so remarkable a circumstance, as his officiating for the first time at the baptism of his first-born son :—and as the remains of his predecessor in office were to be consigned the next day to the earth, there was no alternative, but either to forgo this satisfaction,

or to have me baptized when I was only two days old. My mother was extremely averse to her infant's running such a risk as being carried to church so soon, and suggested, that as the rector was very good-natured, he would perhaps come and name the child privately, and then my father could say his Amen just the same as if he were in church. But this would not do:—my father would scarcely have considered his Amen as an Amen pronounced any where but in the church; and he said moreover that he knew enough of physic to be sure that there was no such mighty danger in carrying his child to church, particularly as it was then the month of July, and very warm weather:—besides, it was a part of his medical as well as clerical creed, that nobody ever did catch cold in a church. He observed too that I was a brave chopping hearty boy as any that had been born since he had known the parish; and if he did not think that I should be just as safe in the church as stiving up in my mother's room, he who had long wished so earnestly for a son would be the last person in the world to think of such a thing.

These reasonings, and still more his peremptory decision that it should be so, determined the question; I was carried to church,

and he said his Amen with an emphasis and audibility proportioned to the satisfaction he felt, and never I suppose on any occasion was satisfaction more complete. To crown all, he had afterwards the honour of entertaining the rector himself at his humble habitation. Mr. Armstrong very good-naturedly accompanied him home when the ceremony was over, to eat a piece of cake, and drink a glass of currant wine of his own making. Still further to add to the joy of the day, permission had been given by him, for my father to bring his whole band of vocal performers to the christening, and to conclude the ceremony with an anthem from that part of the tenth chapter of St. Mark which is read in the baptismal service.

CHAPTER VI.

New means devised of raising a fortune.—Mechanical, medical, and musical studies and experiments, with their successes and failures.—The best intentions do not always lead to the best results.—Practical illustration of this truism.

It is not my intention to enter upon a very minute detail of the occurrences and adventures of my earliest years, since I never could find that there was any thing in them very astonishing, very extraordinary, or much out of the common course of infantine biography. It is certain that none were deemed sufficiently distinguished to entitle them to a place among the *Memoirs of celebrated Children**, since I will own that I have looked in vain all over that book for the name of Samuel Danville. Indeed I must acknowledge, though to the mortification of my own vanity, that I cannot discover the least traces amid all the most authentic information I have been able to obtain upon the subject, of my having at that period of my life appeared a prodigy in any eyes but those of my father and mother.

In short, and it is a very hard thing for the hero of his own tale to be obliged to confess,

* A work in one large volume 12mo.

my infant years passed only after the usual manner of those of my predecessors and contemporaries in the parish of Langham. I cut my teeth at the usual time; I was able to walk sooner than many children, for I was always remarkably strong and healthy: I had my full portion of those hair-breadth scapes which are generally more or less the lot of all children; for I was exceedingly apt to get into mischief, and ere yet my third year was fully completed, I had twice had a handsome ducking in a little brook that ran at the bottom of our garden;—a ducking I may truly call it, since it was in running after the young ducks that the misadventure happened. The greatest reflection ever cast upon my infantine prowess was, that my mother used to complain of my being extremely backward with my tongue, from which she drew a melancholy augur that I should grow up very dull and stupid. Perhaps her impatience to hear little Sammy lisp accents which would no doubt sound more than commonly melodious to her ear, led her inadvertently to cast aspersions upon my character which the real fact would not justify.

However this might be, her conclusion was one in which my father could never by any means concur; he regarded the matter in a very different light. "If Sam be so very backward

with his tongue," he would say, "which indeed I do not see it, that is by no means to be regretted, since it is a proof that he will never be a silly idle babbler, but will rather be of a serious contemplative turn, fit for an archbishop, or a king's physician; that he will always reason before he speaks, which that is what a man of sense ought to do, and not be prattling nonsense without reflection, as you know, Hannah, must always be the case with your people who are for ever talking: who knows what may be passing in his little head even at this moment?" The speculation was ingenious, no doubt; but I do suppose that my reasonings and reflections before I could speak were not very deep, or upon very abstruse points.

From the instant of my coming into the world, my father became more and more assiduous every day in his endeavours to increase his means of getting money, that he might have the more to bestow upon my education. His exertions at the forge and anvil were no longer confined to supplying the cavalry of Langham and the adjacent villages with shoes; he enlarged his sphere of action to every branch of the smith's art, whether blacksmith, whitesmith, or locksmith. Nay, he even proceeded a step further, and ventured to make an essay

at infringing upon the business of the clock-maker. Having in quality of his office of clerk ready access to the church clock, he studied the mechanism of it with so much assiduity, and gained by that means such a thorough acquaintance with all its component parts, that he was after a while more successful in correcting what was amiss in it, than the clockmaker at Ambresbury, who had hitherto been the administrator to its wants.

Of the latter, indeed, it is recorded among the chronicles handed down by oral tradition in the village, that once when sent for to administer to some irregularities in the kitchen clock at the Hall, the now Mr. Conway, being then a roguish youth of about fourteen, came to contemplate the progress of his operations, when he took an opportunity of slily conveying one of the wheels into his own pocket. The operator, however, never perceived his loss, but very composedly put the clock together again without it, and departed; when, to the no small amazement of the servants in the kitchen, the next time that in the revolution of things the moment was come about for it to strike, instead of pausing at the eleventh stroke as it ought to have done, it proceeded on and on to another and another, till it had attained the complete number of twenty-three. Mas-

ter Conway was happily within hearing of this notable feat, and almost in fits with laughter produced the wheel, and generously made the whole kitchen partakers in the joke; for which they were all exceedingly grateful, and joined in the laugh with equal heartiness.

But such a casualty could never have happened to my father; for he knew so exactly the precise number of wheels, springs, and other instruments of motion of which every clock with which he ever had any concern was composed, and was so methodical in his arrangement of them round him, whenever he set about a dissection of this kind, that it was impossible for him to have been deprived of the smallest particle without its being immediately missed. I never got into greater disgrace during my infancy, than once when he being called away was obliged to stop in the midst of his operations: his whole apparatus was however left upon the table, arranged in the most exact order, so that he reckoned upon resuming them at his return with as much facility as if they had never been interrupted. Alas, how great was his error! I in the mean time, true to that propensity to mischief at which I have already hinted, seeing such an assemblage of amusing interesting objects within my reach, could not forbear climbing upon a chair and

occupying myself with them, deranging and transposing the order of them, now here now there, till his return, which was a full quarter of an hour; by which time the whole system of the thing was so completely destroyed, that the table presented nothing but a chaotic heap of unarranged elements which called almost for a new creation.

My father surveyed the scene of ruin and confusion with grief and dismay, and I was sent into the corner in a state of the utmost disgrace, nor suffered to emerge from it again without an ample confession that I had been very naughty, and receiving severe denunciations of the much heavier punishments that awaited me, if ever again I should meddle with any thing upon which I saw him employed. Indeed, the confusion into which the whole apparatus had thus been thrown, was a source of perplexity to him which endangered the total overthrow of all the reputation he had acquired in his new art. The system upon which he proceeded being entirely of his own forming, such an interruption of it was fatal to him, nor did he find it possible by any means to restore that order among his elements which I had so fatally destroyed: the consequence was, that in putting the chronicler of time together again, he made so great a mistake in the place he as-

signed to the balance-wheel, that the hand took two turns round the circle of the dial within the hour, instead of one. But as this small mistake was corrected before the clock returned to its own lodgings again, the disaster was never publicly known: it was not corrected, however, till after several new experiments upon placing the wheel had been unsuccessfully made, and he had been obliged at last to have recourse to dissecting his own clock, to assure himself of the precise place which it ought to occupy. This important secret was, however, for the moment confined entirely to himself and his Hannah; it was only divulged in private once to me, when in my maturer years my good parent was entertaining me, as good parents are very generally fond of entertaining their grown-up children, with the simplicities and lapses of my childhood.

All this, however, is digression. I now resume my regular narrative. My father, having succeeded so well in the essay of his talents which he made upon the church clock, found such encouragement to proceed, that he next applied himself to that which ticked behind the door in his own kitchen; when he met with equal success. These, however, were trifles; nor, though many compliments were paid by the neighbours to his ingenuity, was he at all

elated by them. But when at length recourse was had to him for the correction of some wanderings and irregularities in the clock at the rectory, then indeed he began to consider his talents as of some value; it was plain then that they were held in some esteem by Mr. Armstrong, and that was a thing of which there was good reason to be proud.

Nor in another of his favourite branches of science, the study of physic, did he remain stationary. His medical practice was no longer confined to the brute creation, he learned to breathe a vein in the human arm, and to extract a rebel tooth;—in the latter operation he soon became so great an adept, that he was seldom known to exceed two pulls, never three. He besides took upon himself to prescribe, or, as he commonly termed it, *subscribe*, for different diseases, and was much consulted not only by the labouring class, but even by the farmers of the parish. He was in general a fortunate practitioner; and it is probable that one advantage was derived by his patients from consulting him rather than persons regularly trained to the profession, that the operations of nature were less impeded by his remedies than they might have been by those prescribed scientifically. Not that he had studied Galen and Hippocrates, or was even deeply read in *Buchan's Do-*

mestic Medicine; he never pretended to any other knowledge than what was drawn from observation and experience; and though nobody, he would say, "had a greater respect for learning, which to be sure they must be fools indeed that despised it, yet he could not help thinking that experience without learning was of more value than learning without experience; at least he might congratulate himself that he had never done any harm by his prescriptions; and that was more than every body could say." His grand specific was a dose of jalap, on the virtues of which he would often expatiate very learnedly, affirming that he believed more good was done by thirty or forty grains of this simple powder, than by all the concoctions ever made up, of all the things with hard names that the apothecary's shop could furnish.

His musical talents too were further exerted, that no source from whence there appeared a chance of any emolument being derived might be neglected. He established a school for the instruction of young people in psalmody, which was held on a Sunday evening during the summer months; and he had so many scholars, both from his own and several of the neighbouring parishes, that he actually made it more profitable than could possibly have been imagined.

Nor was my mother, who in her eager wishes to see her son a great man was no way behindhand with my father, less ardent in her exertions to procure the means of making him so. On her father's death, which happened very soon after my birth, the shop devolved to her, and it became a primary object with her to render it as advantageous as possible. For this purpose she immediately made new arrangements for stocking it; and whereas her father had always purchased his wares at Ambresbury, she settled correspondences with London dealers, and had them all at the first hand, besides increasing very considerably the variety of articles in which she dealt. The consequence was, that her shop soon became vastly superior to those usually found in country villages, and even rivalled the very best shops at Ambresbury; so that the farmers' wives who had been accustomed to send thither for their tea and sugar, now dealt entirely with Hannah Danville. Her choice of ribbands too was so exceedingly improved, that the farmers' daughters condescended to supply themselves from her stock, and even to appear on a Sunday at church in hats and bonnets ornamented with purchases from it.

To the medical science also, she, no less than my father, turned her attention; and

when old Ruth Morden, who had long been *accoucheuse* to the parish, became from increasing years unable to continue her practice, my mother, who had long been her pupil, rose to be her successor.

But there was still another object from which she derived great profit, and on which she piqued herself exceedingly, because it spread her fame much further and wider than either of the others could do;—this was the bringing-up poultry. She always furnished the London market with some of the earliest spring chickens and turkey-poults, ducklings, and green-geese that were brought to it, and the higgler flattered her with the assurance that he could always get a higher price from the London dealers for whatever poultry he carried to them, if he could assure them it was Hannah Danville's feeding. Besides, it was an agreement between them, that on her engaging never to let any body but himself have her poultry, he was to bring the goods for her shop, as back carriage from London, by his cart, at a cheaper rate than she must have paid by the stage waggon. Sometimes, indeed, this branch of her industry would occasion little altercations between her and my father; for, if the weather happened to be very cold early in the spring when she had any young broods, they then

wanted the best place at the fire, and he was turned out of the chimney corner, where only he could smoke his pipe in comfort: and even the apology that it was all done for Sam's benefit, which my mother thought quite sufficient, and which my father would have thought so in any other case, hardly passed current in this.

It has been stated that my father's first Amen was said at my baptism, and the second at the funeral of his predecessor in office. The marriages of Mr. Armstrong and his sister Eleanor had taken place in the intermediate day between the death of the old clerk and the appointment of the new one; and it was probably owing to the manner in which the rector was occupied just at this moment, that he delayed for so long a time as two days communicating to my father his intentions with regard to him, since he must be well aware that the intelligence would give him particular satisfaction. The first *Sunday*, therefore, of the new clerk's officiating, was rendered almost as remarkable as the first *occasion* of it, since it was that of the bride's, as well as the clerk's, first appearance in their new seats at church. On this occasion, my father, who never passed over any opportunity of bringing forward the talents of his vocal band into particular notice, obtained

leave of the rector, as the most appropriate manner in which such an event as the bride's appearance could be celebrated, to perform an anthem from the 128th psalm, which constitutes a part of the matrimonial service. Just a year after, the clerk had the inexpressible pleasure of officiating at the baptism of Mr. Armstrong's first and only child, Walter.

But the satisfaction derived by Mr. Armstrong from the birth of this child, was soon damped by the state of his mother's health, which began evidently to be such as to give the most serious cause of alarm to all her connections. During the time of her pregnancy she had appeared in a very precarious state; but hopes were always entertained that her complaints were only incidental to her situation, and that when her confinement was over her health would be gradually restored. These flattering ideas, however, soon vanished before the sad reality; and in a short time it became obvious to every body but herself, that her mortal career was drawing rapidly to a close. Her own insensibility to her situation was indeed to others only a fatal confirmation of the hopelessness of her case.

Poor Eleanor heard with an almost broken heart of her friend's approaching fate. Her own imprudent precipitation, which had led her

brother into adopting a measure neither congenial to his wishes, nor wholly sanctioned by his judgement, while it had proved ineffectual to save her friend, now presented itself to her mind with increased feelings of regret and self-reproach. She was herself recently become a mother, having brought into the world a very fine little girl; and as soon as she was recovered from her confinement she obtained the consent of her husband to go and attend upon her dying friend, and administer what consolation she was able to her brother in the distressing situation into which she herself had brought him.

Mr. Armstrong's conduct as a husband had been, as in every other social relation in which he had been tried, most exemplary. His uniform endeavour had been to conceal from Sophia the motives which led to his making her his wife—to prevent her entertaining any idea that she was not the decided object of his choice. He conceived that if this should be suspected by her, the sacrifice he had made would be wholly unavailing; that he should even have given her a source of more poignant distress than that which he had sought to relieve.

While sometimes willing to flatter himself with hopes that his endeavours were crowned with success, yet at others he could not banish from his mind apprehensions that they were not

so. As far, however, as words could confirm his hopes, Sophia gave him every reason to believe that they were not ill-founded. To him she had no power of uttering her feelings; but in her letters to Eleanor she spoke of the happiness she enjoyed as a wife, with an ardour bordering on enthusiasm. Never, she said, she believed, was happiness so pure, so without alloy, enjoyed by any woman; never was any one blessed with so kind, so affectionate a husband; every day inspired her with new admiration of his character, for every day brought forth fresh instances of a thousand amiable and excellent qualities only to be thoroughly known in so near and dear a connection. Tributes such as these Eleanor knew would be so grateful to her brother, that she never failed to communicate them; but that he did not derive entire satisfaction from them, he was afterwards obliged to acknowledge to her. He was afraid, he said, that Sophia only deceived herself into a belief that such were her feelings; he could not but apprehend, that notwithstanding the caution with which he sought to maintain a delusion necessary to her repose, and her willingness to be deluded, latent suspicions of the truth would sometimes involuntarily intrude themselves upon her mind. He even thought there was reason to fear that the intrusion of such suspicions, and her endeavours to combat them,

and persuade herself that they were unreasonable, had an influence in preventing the restoration of her health. How far these ideas might be well or ill founded could not be decided, the object who alone could confirm or confute them being no more.

Nor were any other means neglected by Mr. Armstrong which might afford a prospect of saving her from her impending fate; he had recourse to the best medical advice, and even proposed to the physicians, as the only remaining hope, her being carried to a warmer climate. They candidly owned that this could be of no avail; and advised, as the kindest thing to be done in her situation, that she should remain quietly at home for the short period she could still have to live. Had she been more sensible of her own danger, perhaps something might have transpired to confirm or confute Mr. Armstrong's apprehensions; some look, some word might have escaped, by which the state of her mind might have been more certainly indicated. But to the last she considered her illness as only temporary, and expired in the arms of her husband, while laying plans with him for many things to be done when she was recovered.

Mr. Armstrong was deeply affected at her fate: it was impossible that a heart like his should not be so, knowing that he was himself the occasion, though innocently, of her being

cut off even in the meridian of life. But he was a man and a Christian, and he bore his affliction as such. If he compassionated her fate, and experienced deep regrets at the cause of it, the separation from her could not be a stroke of equal anguish to what would have been felt had the union been of his own seeking,—had it been one that he himself ardently desired: and he had this reflection to console him, that no sooner was he aware of the unintentional injury she had received, than every thing in his power was done to repair it. His blindness in not discerning more readily the impression he had made, could not be imputed to him as a fault; it rather showed the humi[lity] of his mind as to his own endowments,—[a] total absence of that vanity not unfrequent eve[n] among sensible men, which fancies that to be known and to be loved by a woman is almost the same thing.

He had as severe, perhaps a severer pang to experience, when about three weeks after the death of Sophia he was to be separated from Eleanor. He had already been indulged with her company even longer than it was perhaps reasonable to expect her husband to spare her, and both agreed that it would be unpardonable to think of trespassing further upon his indulgence. It was now that they felt in its whole extent to how many remote causes of sorrow

one hasty step may lead. What would not both have given that Eleanor had been still at liberty!—that now, as heretofore, there had been no tie so binding upon her as to administer to the comforts and happiness of a brother, who had not thought any sacrifice too great to promote hers. But the thing was past remedy,—Eleanor was a wife, and had duties to perform as such, which were paramount to every other consideration. She had, besides, really much cause of gratitude to her husband, and to this she was not insensible; though in examining her heart, as little could she be insensible, that it was much more devoted to sisterly ..n to conjugal affection.

She had found Lawrence Middleton, as she had every reason to expect, a worthy, an honest, and an industrious man in the most extended sense of these words, and as such she respected him; but her sensations towards him could never go further than respect:—that nameless something which inspires affection we know not why, which we can feel much better than we can describe, she looked for in vain. She could not be unhappy; for she saw her husband free from even the remotest tendency to vice, anxious to please her, solicitous to promote her happiness, and to procure her every comfort consistent with his fortune and

situation :—yet when she compared him with her brother, (and this she sometimes caught herself doing involuntarily,) she could not disguise to herself how much the latter was his superior; nor could she feel it without sensations of mortification and regret.

But these feelings were confined to her own bosom: to her brother she was eager in displaying Lawrence's good qualities; nor ever spoke but with warm expressions of gratitude of his affectionate conduct towards her. If Mr. Armstrong was afraid she did not experience all the happiness in her marriage that a wedded life is capable of affording, this apprehension was entirely the result of his own observations; it did not proceed from any thing he had ever heard drop from her even inadvertently. Yet the mere suspicion that this was so, occasioned him much additional regret at parting with her; while she was far from quitting him with satisfied feelings, when she reflected that she was now separating herself from the dearest object she had on earth, though but a brother, and was going to join one who had but a subordinate place in her affections,—yet that one was her husband.

CHAPTER VII.

More odd notions entertained by a young divine upon a variety of topics.—Delicate questions concerning education ingeniously discussed, and sagaciously resolved.—A profound argument held upon the important question, whether a Christian can conscientiously learn the Greek language.

Mr. Armstrong's first cares were now to take a new direction :—he was a father, and to form the mind of his child to the pursuit of virtue here, that he might have a prospect of enjoying eternal happiness hereafter, was become his primary, his most important duty. Anxious as he had ever been faithfully to discharge every trust that devolved upon him, he felt that he had never yet been engaged in one equally arduous; in one that involved a greater variety of duties; that demanded such unwearied, such unabated attention. While the world in general is prone to dwell upon the great duties owed by children to their parents, upon the great obligations they are under to them, he always dwelt rather upon the duties of parents to their children, which he considered as of a nature much more urgent, much more binding.

The very existence of a child he could not but feel is not a matter of his own choice; it

has been imposed upon him without any consent of his own; and nothing, therefore, can be more arbitrary, more unjust, than to consider a child as subjected to duties, by an act which it remains for subsequent circumstances to determine whether it shall be a blessing or a curse to him. But a parent stands in a very different situation; he has voluntarily subjected himself to the duties which he knows to be annexed to the character he is assuming; and in assuming it he enters into a tacit but most solemn engagement, not only with the being which he brings into the world, but with the greatest of all beings, punctually and conscientiously to fulfil these duties. He is well aware what the duties are; that they extend alike to forming the mind and the body of the child; to restraining him from vice, and instructing him in the ways of virtue:—that the being towards whom they are incurred, is one who from its very nature requires, during its infancy, its childhood, and even till some years past what is termed manhood, an attention which can admit of no relaxation. He is perfectly sensible that parental duties cannot be performed by fits and starts; now practised, now laid aside; that they must be regularly, uniformly, steadily adhered to. All this he knows before he becomes a parent; and all this he engages himself to

perform. 'Tis only when these duties have been faithfully discharged that a parent has indeed conferred obligations upon his children; that he has a right to consider them as bound in strong duties towards him: and it is rarely that a child who has experienced such kindness, such affection, so many benefits from a parent, will be found wanting in the return that he owes for them. But what obligation has a child to its parents for merely giving it existence, if after it be come into the world they have not done all in their power to render that existence a blessing?

Far from coinciding with the general opinion, that nothing more is necessary for a mere infant than to be properly fed and clothed, and to be kept clean, and that a parent's duty is sufficiently performed in seeing that these things are properly attended to by the nurse to whose hired services the care of the child is delegated; —so far was Mr. Armstrong from regarding these attentions, though of great importance, as all that an infant requires; he considered the early years of infancy as a period when some of the strongest impressions are made upon the mind,—some of those which contribute essentially to forming the future character; —and he thought it of infinite importance that children should be then, as much as at any pe-

riod of their lives, immediately, and constantly under the eye of their parents.

It was to him inconceivable, how any man, one professing Christianity in particular, professing to believe in a future state of eternal happiness or misery, could support the idea of having forced into existence a being, who, perhaps through his inattention and mismanagement during its infancy, had in maturer years pursued that course of life which was to doom him at last to an eternity of misery.—To an eternity of misery!—or if not absolutely to an eternity, at least to long, long ages of misery!—Tremendous idea!—What an awful responsibility then does a man take upon himself in becoming a parent!—and how can parents delude themselves so far as to suppose that they are fulfilling the sacred trust they have taken upon themselves, when they leave their infants to the care of a heedless nurse, or an ignorant negligent school-mistress, (in whose hands they are perhaps to receive those first impressions which will fix for ever their future character,) merely to relieve themselves from the troublesome attention that infancy requires?

Mr. Armstrong, upon the death of his wife, consented, at Mrs. Middleton's earnest request, and on her engaging to attend to the child herself, and not leave him to servants, that she

should have the care of Walter till he was two years old: the father was nevertheless a daily visitor at Ambresbury, to see that the child was not spoiled by that excess of diseased fondness which a grandfather and grandmother are too apt to lavish upon their grandchildren. But the two years expired, Walter was taken home, and from that time was scarcely ever out of his father's sight. Mr. Armstrong was himself his sole instructor, and he saw with pleasure that there was every appearance of the utmost sweetness of temper in his child; he was only concerned to perceive, that though he learnt every thing with facility, yet no impression seemed permanent on his mind; things were scarcely sooner learned than forgotten. He hoped, however, that this was only the effect of infantine inattention, and, as his temper was docile and tractable, that greater steadiness would come in time.

Whether he should educate his son entirely himself, or send him in due time to a public school, was a point upon which he found it extremely difficult to decide. He thought that in some respects there were manifest advantages to boys in a public education; in particular it seemed somewhat desirable, as they must unavoidably sooner or later come to a knowledge of the world, and of the vices and

follies with which it abounds, that they should rather arrive at this knowledge in the gradual way it is attained mingled amongst a large society of youths of different ages and dispositions, than that they should be plunged into so trying a scene all at once, at that dangerous period of life when the season of childhood is past, and that of manhood is approaching. He thought that the illusory attractions of the world were more seductive to one who then became suddenly acquainted with them, than to those whose experience had been more gradually acquired.

On the other hand, he had objections to a public school which were almost insurmountable. He detested the system which punishes in an equal manner an error in grammar, and a transgression against the laws of religion and morality. This he conceived to be such a perversion of all ideas of right and wrong in the youthful mind, that scarcely any of the advantages presented could counterbalance it. He thought that if a child was once taught to regard the making a false concord in his Latin exercise as an offence deserving equal severity of punishment with a violation of truth, or any other act of deceit or dishonesty, he was in great danger of ceasing ultimately to regard a strict adherence to truth and honour as virtues

of the highest importance;—that he was little likely to entertain that veneration for them necessary to constitute the character which we are taught to consider as the noblest work of the Creator, AN HONEST MAN.

Another very important objection, in his opinion, to public schools was, the perpetual recourse had in them to corporal punishment. This was a mode of correction which he held in the most determined detestation. He considered it as debasing to the mind, and believed that whatever might be gained from administering it on the score of advancement in learning, was lost in lessening the feeling of moral principle. Besides, that after being repeatedly administered, the children become hardened to it, and it ceases to be a punishment. When they know that a neglect of their studies, a deviation from the rules of the school, or even a dereliction of the moral precepts inculcated upon them in their daily attendance upon the appointed religious exercises, are any, and all of them, to be compromised with *only a flogging*, they will rather submit to a transient bodily uneasiness which habit has taught them to brave, than restrain themselves in any irregularity into which they may be impelled by the ardour of youth and the intemperance of the passions. Nay, it is well known, that if

a boy supports the correction heroically, it is considered among his schoolfellows rather as a matter of triumph than of disgrace ;—in their ideas, it is not the having deserved correction that degrades, it is only the having shrunk from it with cowardice when it was to be undergone.

Another very material objection to a public school, in Mr. Armstrong's opinion, was, that though among a large number of boys there must be a great diversity of talents and dispositions, yet these could never be considered, and taught to take the direction for which they seemed more particularly adapted ; the same course of study must necessarily be pursued by all. No difference even could be made in the task assigned to the boy who had such a quickness of parts that he seemed to imbibe his learning almost intuitively, and him whose less lively powers could acquire nothing without intense toil and application. In a private education regard might be had to the genius and turn of each child, and their studies might be accordingly directed to the objects best suited to their talents.

But in Walter's case there was another very important consideration. It was early evident that the declining state of his mother's health during the whole time of her pregnancy had

influenced that of her offspring, and it appeared but too plain, that without great attention to this point there was little chance of his reaching the age of manhood. If, as he advanced in life, these apprehensions should be confirmed, there could then be no doubt that he must remain where paternal anxiety would give every requisite attention to his health, not be sent where he must undergo hardships ill suited to a delicate frame. Since, however, it was decided that in any case he should not go to school before he was eleven or twelve years of age, it was not necessary till then to settle the important question of whether he should go at all: that must indeed be unavoidably determined by the circumstances that might arise in the interval, and exist at that moment.

I was not less, as will be supposed, the object of my father's most anxious cares and solicitudes. Impressed as he was with the profoundest respect for learning, he had taken infinite pains to acquire a facility of reading, and he did indeed read with a fluency and correctness very rare in a person in his situation. As he had often heard Mr. Armstrong, who was his oracle in almost every thing, deprecate the little schools to which children are usually sent, (for it must be remembered that at this

time the Lancasterian system of instruction had not started into existence,) and saw that he was himself the instructor of his son, he determined to follow his example, and be my instructor. In this undertaking he succeeded so well, that by the time I was five years old I could read my Testament, or indeed any English book, very fluently, even more so than the young rector. This was matter of no small exultation to my father. "It was true that I was a year older than master Walter," he would say, "which at our ages that was certainly a good deal of difference; but then Mr. Armstrong was a man of so much more learning than himself, that it was natural to expect the son of the one to be as good a scholar at four years old, as the son of the other at five." In one respect indeed I was much Walter's superior, that I took more pains to retain in my mind whatever I learnt than he did; and while he would repeat a lesson one day very perfectly, without omitting a word, but the next had entirely forgotten it,—I, though I learnt less rapidly, never forgot any thing in which I had once been perfect.

Mr. Armstrong observing the pains bestowed on my education by my father, and seeing that I had none of the coarse rustic habits common among children in a country village, so

that there was no danger of Walter's imbibing impressions from an acquaintance with me which he would wish avoided, allowed me from a very early period to visit at the rectory as the companion and playfellow of his son, to our mutual satisfaction and delight.

Encouraged by this flattering distinction, my father after awhile ventured to disclose to the rector his views with regard to me, and his great ambition to see me a minister of the church of England, requesting his opinion upon the plan, and, if it met with his approbation, his advice how it might best be prosecuted. Mr. Armstrong said he saw no objection whatever to the idea in itself; the only question was, whether it was within the compass of my father's means to incur so great an expense as he must be at in educating me for this profession,—but of that he was himself the best judge. However, he suggested that some assistance towards my education might be procured in ways perfectly creditable and respectable, and particularly he mentioned the getting me into Christ's Hospital. Here the expenses of supporting me would be much smaller than at any other school, at the same time that I should be perfectly well educated, and assistance would likewise be afforded, on my quitting the school, towards maintaining

me at college. He the rather recommended this plan, he said, as he had himself some interest among the governors of the institution, and thought that through their means he could get my name put upon the list for admission when I should be arrived at the proper age. This proposal my father accepted with the utmost gratitude, and I was accordingly put upon the list, being then in my sixth year.

Another very important matter was now to come under consideration. Destined to the church, it was necessary that I should acquire a knowledge of the learned languages, and how was that to be obtained? It was true that I should be instructed in them at Christ's Hospital: but my father was not satisfied with this; he was desirous, both for my credit and his own, that before my admission there I should attain as competent a knowledge of them as could be expected for my years. He once revolved in his mind the idea of procuring instruction in Greek and Latin himself, that he might be qualified afterwards to instruct me in them; but on further consideration this plan was rejected. It was very essential to the realisation of his projects for my future aggrandisement, that his time should be almost entirely devoted to getting money; and if he should apply himself to study, the forge must

be neglected. This would never do;—for though the imagination of my father with regard to the future greatness of his family soared somewhat above the regions of this world below, and ascended into those of the air, yet he was not devoid of common sense; and he had sufficient to see that the neglect of the forge, whence the largest proportion of the funds necessary for realising his plans was derived, would be the means of overthrowing them all. He therefore wisely resolved rather to make the forge perform a double duty and pay for my education, than hazard, by attempting too much, the destruction of all his hopes.

Respecting the propriety of my being instructed in one of the learned languages, the Greek, he sometimes had his doubts. From certain expressions in some parts of the Scriptures it appeared to him as if the learning of the Greeks was considered by the sacred writers as mere *foolishness.* Now if so, surely that was a language which no Christian divine ought to think of studying. Yet he recollected that all the great divines of the Anglican church were acquainted with it; he had even heard that in their examination for orders they were expected to read, and expound, a part of the Greek Testament. How

were these seeming contradictions to be reconciled?—After having perplexed himself for some time upon the subject, he recollected that he had sometimes heard preachers from the pulpit cite instances of mistranslation in our English version of the sacred writings, and he determined that all passages which seemed to disparage the learning of the Greeks must be mistranslations, or else it was impossible that any Christian divine could study Greek.

He once thought of laying his doubts before Mr. Armstrong, and consulting him whether there could be any thing unscriptural in my being taught this language. But the idea was soon rejected. He knew that the rector himself was a very good Greek scholar; and to start a doubt to him upon the propriety of a clergyman's understanding Greek, would be a sort of implied reflection upon him. Besides, seeing him such a perfect pattern of what he thought a minister of the Gospel ought to be, he could not conceive that this branch of learning could be really injurious to a person's morals; —and recurring again to his favourite idea of mistranslation, he satisfied himself that he had found the true solution of this great difficulty, and concluded with hoping to see me, in due time, as good a Greek scholar as the rector himself.

But though he thought that he could not consistently with good manners consult his oracle upon the propriety of my entering on the study in question; yet when he had satisfied himself that his doubts upon the subject were unfounded, and determined upon my learning my *alpha beta*, there seemed no impropriety whatever in consulting him upon the means of commencing the study. On the contrary, this seemed but a proper compliment to his superior judgement and understanding; and he might be able to recommend some eligible school where a good foundation might be laid, so that I might appear with credit when removed to the Hospital. Perhaps my father was not without a secret hope that, since I was a great favourite at the rectory, I might be invited to become the sharer of the young rector's studies, as I was already of his sports and amusements;—that the rector would himself undertake to instruct me. If such were his ideas, the event showed that he had not calculated too largely on the extent of the rector's kind dispositions towards me; for the subject was no sooner mentioned, than Mr. Armstrong said that he would very gladly take me as a pupil if my father liked it; adding that, since he had his own son to instruct, two scholars would scarcely be more trouble than one. He

even anticipated, he was pleased to say, much advantage to Walter, from having an associate in his studies, as he had generally observed that a more rapid progress was made by children where they had a competitor to excite their emulation.

CHAPTER VIII.

Steadiness and volatility.—Unfortunate juvenile propensities, and curious ideas arising from them.—A most disastrous mistake.—Mortification occasioned and disgrace incurred by it.

Behold me then no longer the associate only of the young rector's idle hours, but become equally the sharer of his studies. My father had always taught me to consider the rector as such a very great man, that I was not a little proud of being his pupil, and was therefore extremely anxious to merit his approbation. I accordingly applied myself to my learning with greater diligence than ever, and made so rapid a progress that he would often hold me up to Walter as a model for his imitation. This was very gratifying to me, but infinitely more so to my father: the prospect of my being a better scholar than the son of the clergyman, flattered beyond measure his wishes of seeing the name of Danville rise to distinction.

It was not in the learned languages alone that Mr. Armstrong undertook to be my instructor; I was to participate in every thing learnt by my young friend; and there were none of the various accomplishments possessed

by the rector himself, that he did not propose imparting to us. When we had made a tolerable progress in Greek and Latin, he intended to instruct us also in French and Italian: my removal to Christ's Hospital prevented my making much proficiency in the two latter languages under him; the means afforded me subsequently of improving myself in them, will appear in the proper place. Drawing is an art in which children so early take delight, and it was one in which Mr. Armstrong excelled so much, that he gave us instruction in it from the first of my becoming his pupil.

But carelessness and thoughtlessness seemed so much a part of Walter's nature, that it was entirely out of his father's power to counteract them: his advancement in age, far from rendering him more steady, seemed only to increase this sole defect in his disposition. I say defect, for such it really was, and nothing worse; it was not want of capacity, it was not waywardness or perverseness; he was ready at learning, he was desirous of pleasing his father; but a nameless something, easier comprehended than defined, was always at variance with his wishes. His head seemed like a filtering-stone, retaining for a short time what was put into it, but by little and little it was constantly oozing out: it was only by repeatedly and repeatedly

learning the same thing, that any part of it remained impressed on his mind. And yet there was in other respects no defect in his memory:—at the same time that whatever he learned by study was almost instantly forgotten, events were remembered by him with perfect accuracy, and very circumstantially, even some that had passed when he was such a mere infant that it could hardly be supposed he would then have noticed them.

This disposition was seen by Mr. Armstrong with constantly increasing uneasiness and apprehension, and every means of correction consistent with his ideas and principles was tried by him, but tried in vain. He saw in it the seeds of a thousand nameless ills;—there was no saying, in short, to what inconveniences, to what errors, even to what vices, it might not ultimately lead. From the rod he had as yet abstained, determined not to have recourse to an expedient so revolting to his mind, but in the last extremity; and he was very unwilling to abandon all hope that the reformation he was anxious to accomplish might not at length be effected by gentler methods.

It was indeed his great desire to avoid punishment at all; he was solicitous to make us both do whatever he required, from a worthier principle than fear of punishment,—

from a feeling that it was right it should be done. He did not confine us to any specific length of time for our studies; we had no exercise given us one day which was to be done by the next; we always came to him at an appointed hour, when our task for the morning was set, and we were not suffered to quit his study till it was duly performed: we therefore knew that we had no means of getting away to our play, but learning our lessons diligently. The same was repeated in the afternoon: at a certain hour we were again summoned to our tasks, and there was no hope of retiring till they were properly finished. In writing, if we had not done well, if we had hurried over our allotted portion, under the idea of being the sooner released, it was all to be done over and over again till it met with our tutor's approbation. With me this system was attended with the happiest effect: once perfectly convinced that no relaxation on this point was to be expected, I ceased to think of it, and never idled or loitered in the performance of my task.

But with poor Walter the case was very different. Though sometimes he would see me, with tears in his eyes, quit the room to go after my own inventions when he had still his whole lesson to learn, he yet had not command

enough of himself to profit by repeated warnings; but the same thing would recur again and again; nor could any experience of the certainty that he would be detained, break him of the propensity to be thinking of and attending to any thing rather than the proper business of the moment. Still, this was his only fault: he never sought by a falsehood or a shuffling excuse to varnish over his negligence; he owned he had been naughty, and begged his father to forgive him; yet the same thing recurred the very next day.

The only object to which he gave any thing like serious and earnest attention was drawing: with that he took great pains, and seemed to have great delight in it. Often indeed, instead of learning his lesson, he would amuse himself with sketching figures on the margin of his book, and never seemed to recollect that he had a lesson to learn till he saw me depart, my task having been duly performed. He was not, however, for these offences deprived of a pencil given him by his father; he was still subjected only to the same penalty, not being suffered to stir till his allotted task was done. Mr. Armstrong said he did not wish to deprive him of such a source of amusement; he only wished to make him sensible that there were times when it was proper, and times

when it was not proper, that it should be used.

But though my father had every reason to be satisfied with the diligence I showed in pursuing my studies, and with the rapid progress I made in them ;—though he was often gratified beyond measure at hearing the rector express his approbation of my behaviour, and commend the attention I showed to his instructions ;—and that he was besides not a little flattered at now and then receiving a compliment himself upon his son's being such a good boy, and doing his parents so much credit, since it showed that he must have been well trained from his infancy ;—notwithstanding the gratification he received from these things, there was yet one circumstance with regard to me, which operated as a cruel allay to his satisfaction, and excited in him the most mortifying apprehensions.

Having always been considered by him as so great a treasure, he thought that he never could sufficiently testify his love and fondness for me, that he never could have enough of my company ;—and since his avocations precluded him from enjoying it at home, he often used to carry me with him to his workshop even when I was not more than four years old. Here the wonderful effects which I saw pro-

duced by his art, filled me with the deepest admiration, till, from repeatedly contemplating them, I was led at last to consider the trade of a smith as the perfection of human ingenuity. But what I admired far beyond all other things was the shoeing a horse. I knew by my own experience, for in my propensity to mischief I had once met with such a disaster, that a nail being run into the foot of a human being would hurt it exceedingly ; and my father, who was himself of a very humane disposition, and wished to inspire me with humanity towards animals, always inculcated upon me very strongly that they could feel when they were hurt, as much as we did. I was extremely surprised, therefore, when first I saw him driving nails into the feet of horses, a thing which seemed in direct contradiction to the precepts I had so often received from him, and could not forbear expressing my astonishment that he should be so cruel to the poor horses. To this he replied by explaining that he could do it without hurting them*; and this I should

* My father here spoke according to the commonly received notion, but it seems by no means certain that this notion is accurate : on the contrary, many persons conversant with horses, and accustomed to see the operation of shoeing performed upon them, are of opinion that the animal finds it a very painful one.

understand better when I became a man like himself: but it would be very wrong in me to think of driving a nail into an animal now, since I was too little to know how to do it properly. I was so exceedingly astonished at what he told me, that I immediately considered him as endowed with talents which, if I had known then how to express myself, I should have called super-human; and from that time it became with me the touchstone of a great man, whether or not he could shoe horses.

Since, therefore, my father had always taught me to consider the rector as a much greater man than himself, and had often promised me that, if I was a good boy and attended well to my book, I should one day be as great a man as he was; so all the distinction which I could possibly conceive him to have over others was, that he must shoe a great many more horses. Yet what perplexed me was, that I had never seen a forge and workshop at the rectory, and I could not imagine where the rector could perform his exploits in the God Vulcan's art. I was however so fully persuaded that such exploits must be performed by him, that in the simplicity of my heart, one day when Walter and I had both been very good boys, and our diligence at our lessons had been much commended by our instructor, I could not refrain from asking him whether, as we had been so

good, he would not show us his workshop, and let us see him work the next time he had a horse to shoe.

I have often heard him say that he was excessively surprised at this request, and could not imagine what had prompted it, or led me to suppose that he ever did shoe horses; nor was he less amused when, on his inquiring into the matter, I explained what was passing in my mind, and expressed the utmost astonishment at finding that he was totally ignorant of my father's art. He very good-naturedly endeavoured to make me understand that different people must be differently employed, and each might be a great man in his way, although their employments were dissimilar. That it was my father's business to shoe horses, and to do many other very useful things of the like description, but that it would not be right for every body to be employed in the same way. That it was his business to pray to God, and to teach people to be good that they might deserve the favour of God, and of their fellow-creatures; and to write sermons, and instruct young people as he did me and his son Walter.

This explanation however did not satisfy me: I still could not comprehend but that a mechanical occupation, and above all that which my father followed, must require talents

far superior to those requisite for praying and preaching, or for instructing children. A child, I said, could learn Greek and Latin, but a child could not shoe a horse;—I therefore inferred that the latter must be the more difficult, consequently the more manly occupation, and sighed above all things for the time when I should be a man, and able to work like my father. I will own too, when I found that the rector could not shoe a horse, his consequence was for awhile somewhat diminished in my eyes. Though I still attended diligently to his instructions, and received them even with pleasure; yet the idea of learning my father's employment was that on which my imagination dwelt with far greater complacency, as an object much more worthy of ambition, than making sermons and preaching them in the pulpit.

That I was destined to do the latter, never indeed entered my head; till having repeatedly asked my father when I should be old enough to shoe a horse, he told me that this was not to be my occupation; that I was to be a rector like Mr. Armstrong, and preach and pray like him. I felt extremely mortified, even to shedding tears. "Yes," I said, "so I would preach and pray if he desired it; but do, father, let me learn besides to shoe horses!" On this

subject I had importuned him so often, that at length, to satisfy me, he said that I must not expect it till I had learned all my Greek and Latin books; and when I could read them well, and Mr. Armstrong had nothing more to teach me, then I should be instructed in his trade.

I had often given Walter a very fine and elaborate description of the wonderful feats performed by my father, and excited in him so large a proportion of the admiration which I felt myself at his talents, that he had sometimes been permitted, as a treat, to accompany me to the workshop that he might see and admire what was going forward there. I had no sooner received my father's promise, for such I regarded it, that I should one day be initiated into these great mysteries, than I hastened to communicate the joyful tidings to my friend. Walter, on whom every new idea made a strong impression, was so much struck with this, that nothing could satisfy him but that he also must go through the same course of instruction; and he begged me to ask whether my father would not take him as a pupil, if he should become a good boy and learn his book well.

I delivered his message very faithfully, urging to my father, that since Mr. Armstrong was so good as to teach me Latin and Greek, it was

but reasonable that he in return should instruct my young friend in his art. He declared his willingness to teach master Walter any thing he might wish to learn; but that it must not be thought of unless approved by his papa, for little boys should never think of doing any thing without the permission of their parents. I imparted with joy to Walter, that my father was very ready to comply with his wishes, if his papa's consent could be obtained; and it had actually so much influence upon him, that for several days he was more attentive to his book, in hopes of entitling himself to the reward which he intended to claim. The first impression however worn off, the effect ceased, and his natural thoughtlessness and inattention returned with as much force as ever. His father was much delighted with his diligence while it lasted; but it was not till long after, in conversation with me, that he became sensible of what had occasioned it: he was amused with the idea, and regretted that the effect it had produced was not more lasting.

My unfortunate inclinations were a source of the deepest chagrin to my father; and he often lamented to my mother, with expressions of severe disappointment, the solid reasons there appeared for apprehending that the lowness of my origin was too deeply implanted in my

nature ever to be eradicated. His only hope was that, when I should be removed wholly out of the way of those mechanical employments to which I had taken such an unaccountable fancy, a happy change might be effected, and my mind restored to its proper bias; that I should soon be convinced how vastly superior the profession was to which he destined me, to that which I was disposed to consider with so much partiality. He therefore looked forward very eagerly to my going to Christ's Hospital; though otherwise he would have regretted the necessity of my relinquishing the tuition of Mr. Armstrong, under whom he considered me as in the most promising road for becoming, what he was so ambitious of seeing me, a distinguished scholar and divine.

I cannot help noticing a very severe mortification which his vanity in his child once experienced, through that child's youthful passion for farriery. It was Mr. Armstrong's practice occasionally to invite some of the farmers of his parish to eat roast beef and plum-pudding with him, after the good old English fashion; and my father, though not a farmer, yet as parish-clerk, was invited in his turn to these parties. At one of them, to which I had been also invited as a visitor to Walter, as we were sitting after dinner, the conversation taking

a turn which my father thought favourable to showing off my learning, he asked me as a question *à-propos* to what was passing, what was Latin for a horse?—I replied very coolly, and not as if feeling the least distrust of being right, *Horsus*.

I know not what evil dæmon possessed me at that moment; I certainly knew the proper word very well, if I had considered for only half a second; but I was very much occupied with a walnut which I was peeling, and probably thought more of that than of gratifying my father's vanity; so answered at random, without bestowing a thought on what I said.

"Why, Samuel," said Mr. Armstrong, "what are you thinking of? I never knew you guilty of such a mistake before:—recollect yourself."

I endeavoured to do so; but shame at having been wrong had seized upon me so forcibly that I could not recover my error, or recall to my mind the right word, till it was given me by Mr. Armstrong.

"I dare say, however," says one of the company, "that he knows very well how many nails are put into a horse's shoe."

To this I, thinking to retrieve my lost credit by the readiness and accuracy of my present answer, replied without the least hesitation, "Eight in common, sometimes ten, and if they

want to put the shoe on very very fast, then twelve."

"Aye, aye," said the honest farmer, I was sure he could tell that."

I have often heard my father say that it was impossible to express the mortification occasioned him by what had passed. That I should be more ready with answering how many nails were put in a horse's shoe, than what was Latin for a horse, appeared such a lamentable proof, how much more likely I was to make a great blacksmith than a great divine, that he almost despaired of seeing his family, through me at least, taken out of their original groveling situation. One useful lesson, however, he was taught by the disgrace I had incurred, and that was, never again to attempt showing off my learning before my neighbours.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

CHAPTER IX.

Endeavours to repair injustice.—A great change of situation.—New victims to mortality.—Embarrassments occasioned by it.—Extraordinary project formed by a woman.

In mentioning Eleanor's visit to her brother on occasion of the illness and death of Sophia, it has appeared that, in her union with Lawrence Middleton, negative happiness was the utmost which she could be said to experience.

The doubts which had arisen in her mind, even before the solemnization of her marriage, whether she was acting a strictly honourable part towards Lawrence in accepting his hand, though lulled asleep at the moment by the superior motive which urged her not to recede, subsequent reflection convinced her had not been allowed their full weight. On a more ample and impartial investigation of her conduct, after the hurry and agitation necessarily attendant upon so important a change in her situation had somewhat subsided, she felt that, in her former examination of the question, she had confined herself too much to considering it only as it regarded herself, that she had not sufficiently considered how her future husband was to be affected by it. The nice sense of right and

wrong, which it was scarcely possible not to have acquired in living ten years with her brother, now made her regard the act of which she had been guilty, as one of great injustice towards her husband: it taught her, that if she was authorized to sacrifice herself to her brother's happiness, she was not equally authorized to make another person the sacrifice to it; and that in giving him a wife whose heart and affections were not wholly his, she actually had done so.

To recall what was done was, however, out of her power; the only question that remained was to make him the best atonement which the nature of her offence would admit of, and this she resolved to do by performing with the utmost punctuality every thing which the duty of a wife required of her, and by concealing from him as much as possible how little her heart was really his. All this she had done:—her attention to her domestic concerns was unwearied,—no man's house was managed in a more orderly and regular manner,—there was no department of the household œconomy which she did not herself superintend. She studied her husband's tastes in every respect, alike with regard to the arrangement of her table, the furniture of the house, or her own dress,

and all things were ordered in exact conformity with them in a manner equally remote from extravagance and meanness.

She was far from being a tyrant and virago among her servants; yet she maintained that watchful observance of their proceedings, which was the best security both for herself and them, against their deviating from the fidelity and diligence required by their stations. As she knew exactly what ought fairly to be used of every article intrusted to their care, so they were soon made sensible that she would not suffer herself to be imposed upon; and if upon first entering into her service they showed a disposition to be wasteful, or to appropriate any thing improperly to their own use, even in such a way as servants are apt to consider as lawful perquisites, they were soon taught that either these practices must be laid aside, or their places would be forfeited. At the same time she was never unreasonable in expecting more of them than might fairly be required, and was always willing to allow them all proper relaxation from work, and time sufficient to pay due attention to their own little concerns. She made a point of being at home herself on a Sunday, unless on any very extraordinary occasion, that they might always by turns have

that day for recreation and for seeing their friends; only that they were not allowed to stay out later than nine o'clock.

Nor were the accomplishments she had acquired forgotten or neglected amid her household cares. Though her husband had not received what comes under the description of a polished education, nor ever had sufficient leisure from business to acquire any merely ornamental arts, yet he had a mind well stored with the literature of his own country, and having a good natural understanding, he was a sensible and rational companion. He had no further knowledge of music than what was derived from a good ear, and the habit of occasionally attending musical performances at the theatre:—but he was fond of it; and as Eleanor had been taught music before she came to live with her brother, and he had encouraged her keeping up what knowledge she had in it, she could both play and sing in such a manner as to render her musical talents a source of amusement to her husband, when he came home in the evening, after the business of the day was over. She did not indeed sing with the science and graces of a professor: but she had a pleasing voice; and never aiming at any thing beyond sweetness and simplicity, every lover of simple melody might have heard her

with pleasure. But it was for her husband alone that her talents were exerted; or, if they were displayed to others, it was only to oblige him, and at his particular request.

Of all these attentions, both to support his interest, and to render his home comfortable and happy, he was so sensible, that he would often pour out his soul in expressions of grateful affection, and declare that he believed never man was more blessed in his conjugal ties than he was. Many a time has he brought tears into her eyes when he thus expressed himself:—he thought them tears of affection; but they were tears of self-reproach, that these expressions were not sufficiently merited on her part;—they were excited by her inwardly arraigning herself for not loving such a man;—they were the effusions of a heart filled with regret, from the consciousness that it was a sense of duty alone, not of love for her husband, which influenced all her actions;—they were a painful manifestation of a powerful feeling, that it would have been with infinitely greater delight, with infinitely more cheerfulness, these exertions would have been made to promote the happiness and comfort of her brother than of her husband.

If there was any thing in her conduct which Lawrence could have wished to see otherwise,

it was a certain degree of coldness, amounting sometimes almost to an appearance of inhospitality, in receiving the visitors who came to the house, particularly single gentlemen:—her manner to them on more than one occasion he had even thought repulsive. He was sensible, however, that perfection is not to be expected in any one; and he thought that the man who had nothing else to complain of in a wife had every reason to be thankful for his lot. Could he have read the heart of Eleanor, he would have found that this apparent shade in her character was, equally with every other part of her conduct, the result of a strong sense of duty. Conscious how little her affections were her husband's, she dreaded nothing so much as the idea of any other object becoming interesting to them; and under the influence of that dread, she contracted this distance of manner and behaviour, as deeming it the best security to her heart. In this point she afterwards relaxed very much; when having been for some time a mother, and having objects so dear as her children to interest her affections, she had more confidence in herself, and thought that her maternal cares would occupy her heart sufficiently to render it callous to the danger she had once apprehended.

Eleanor was for the same reason backward

in visiting at Langham, though Lawrence always professed himself ready to spare her, whenever she or Mr. Armstrong wished it. But she was unwilling to throw herself in the way of making comparisons between what her situation was, and what it might have been had she been less hasty and unthinking in forming marriages both for herself and her brother. She knew that she never could compare her husband with her brother, without feeling the latter's superiority; and she wished her husband to be raised, not depreciated, in her esteem. She was, in short, desirous of avoiding as much as possible all society except his and her children's; well knowing the force of habit, and that nothing was so likely as being constantly with them, to make her feel that she could not live without them.

She was only twice down at the rectory between the death of Sophia and my removal to Christ's Hospital, and in neither instance merely for her own gratification; her object both times was to accompany her husband. Country air and exercise had been recommended on account of his health, which was evidently suffering from the confinement and sedentary habits attendant on his occupation. The first of these visits was made before I had become Mr. Armstrong's pupil. She had then, in addition to

the daughter already mentioned, who was just Walter's age, a son two years younger. At the time of her second visit I was just nine years old, and had been for three years the fellow student of her nephew. Lawrence's health was at that time so indifferent, that great reason appeared to apprehend him in a confirmed decline; and though he recovered much on coming into the country, he was warned, that if he should return into the same confined and sedentary way of life, the worst consequences must be expected.

This was to him a most cruel stroke. In relinquishing his employment he was giving up the only means he possessed of maintaining his wife and family; yet if his life should be sacrificed in an useless endeavour to retain his employment, their situation would be still worse, since not only the income would be lost, but they would be deprived of the person whose duty it was to seek them some other means of support. It seemed therefore better, on their account, that he should endeavour to procure employment in some other way, than, by pertinaciously adhering to what he then had, in order to avoid a temporary defalcation of income, run the hazard of subjecting them to a loss which would be irreparable. On quitting London, therefore, to go down to Langham, he resigned his place in the banking-house, and came to seek

health, a prey to the anxiety of not knowing whither to direct his thoughts towards forming a new establishment for his wife and family; every way he saw himself surrounded with difficulties; and this idea, incessantly corroding his mind, contributed towards further wearing out a body already so much enfeebled and debilitated. Mr. Armstrong kindly offered them all an asylum at the rectory till some new establishment should be formed; and Lawrence left it in charge with several friends in London to inquire out some situation for him, not liable to the same objections as that which he had been so reluctantly compelled to relinquish.

Poor Eleanor saw in their present embarrassment an additional reason to condemn her own precipitation in marrying Lawrence. It was true, that at the time of their marriage he had an income fully competent to the maintenance of a family; but it was now evident that she ought to have looked further than to what his situation was at the moment. She ought to have reflected that his was not even a certain life income; it was one subjected to a variety of contingencies; and if any thing should happen to deprive him of that, where were she and her children to look for support? Some difference might arise between her husband and his employers, and he might be discarded their

service;—or those employers might meet with misfortunes, and fail in business, and in that way he might be left destitute;—or he might be, as was now actually the case, from ill health unable to continue in the business. All these things she saw when it was too late; —she saw that she ought to have considered them before she accepted his proposals; and she thought herself not only culpable towards her brother and her husband, but equally so towards her children.

In the course of the summer, however, both her mind and Lawrence's were greatly relieved from his receiving an offer, through the mediation of a friend, of superintending at Wandsworth a branch established there of the business of Mr. Carberry, one of the greatest coal-dealers in London. Here his employment would be almost entirely of an active nature; and living in the country, it was hoped that the ill effects of his former too confined and sedentary life would be effectually counteracted. A good salary was annexed to the situation, with a prospect, if his conduct should be approved, of being at a future period admitted to a partnership in Mr. Carberry's very profitable business, without any deposit of capital. Such an offer was the most salutary medicine that could have been administered to Lawrence;—it was em-

braced by him with eagerness; and this amendment in his prospects soon brought with it a visible amendment in his health. As he was not to enter upon his new office till the autumn, he remained with his family the whole summer, partly at Langham, partly at his father's, and at the appointed time removed to his new residence at Wandsworth.

Very sanguine hopes were for a while entertained, that this change of situation would be attended with the happiest effects, and that Lawrence's health would in time be perfectly restored. But alas! before the expiration of a year the fallacy of these hopes began to be manifest, and the return of all the former symptoms of decline occasioned more cruel cause of alarm than before. Recourse was had to the best medical advice which could be procured, and Eleanor was unwearied in her cares and attendance upon him: yet, spite of all, it soon became obvious that his case was hopeless. He lingered on for another year, and then expired in the arms of his wife, blessing her with his latest breath, and leaving her and her brother the united guardians of his now fatherless children.

The charge of maintaining these children, of completing their education, and of providing for their establishment in the world, now de-

volved upon Eleanor alone; and she saw herself in a situation which necessarily called forth into active exertion all the energy of mind which the various circumstances of her life had led to her endeavouring to acquire. It was a situation by so much worse than that in which she was left at her father's death, since though a thousand pounds was then all that she had in the world, yet she had no one but herself to think of; whereas now she had upon her hands the charge of two beings whom she had brought into existence, and who had a right to expect from her every sacrifice which she could possibly make to render them wise, virtuous, and happy.

Mr. Armstrong, immediately on the death of his brother-in-law, hastened to his sister, to assist and support her under the manifold distresses of her situation. He offered her and her children an asylum under his roof, promising to supply to them, as much as lay in his power, the place of a father; to assist her in educating them; and to contribute, as far as his means would permit, consistently with the justice which he owed his own son, towards providing for their future establishment in life. Eleanor, though thoroughly sensible of her brother's kindness, declined his offer, at least

any further than as a measure of temporary assistance; but for a permanence she felt it her duty to seek out some way of life which would enable her to afford her children a good education, with the means of making a future creditable appearance in the world.

For two years she had been in the habit of contemplating, in idea, the probability of being left a widow; and her thoughts had been directed towards the means of providing for herself and her children supposing her apprehensions to be realized. The stroke did not therefore come upon her totally unprepared to receive it, nor were her thoughts then first to be turned towards the consideration of what duty to her children might require of her. Contemplating the idea of being deprived of her husband, she was also led to study minutely, and with diligence, the nature of his employment. She saw that his place was a very desirable one to retain,—that to be admitted into a share of the business on the terms held out to her husband would be a thing so extremely advantageous to her son, that she was reluctant to relinquish the prospect of it;—and if any other connection should be formed by Mr. Carberry, it was scarcely possible that such a prospect should be realized. She had seen

nothing in her husband's employment which she did not think perfectly within the powers and capacity of a woman to perform ; and she thought that in the case of her husband's death she could very well supply his place, provided the merchant's consent to it could be obtained. She now imparted her idea to her brother, and consulted him upon the expediency of prosecuting it. He thought the undertaking neither beyond her capacity, nor of that merely masculine nature as to be inconsistent with, or degrading to, the female character ; and strongly encouraged her to prosecute the plan, as a laudable effort for the support and advantage of her children. She therefore lost no time, but wrote immediately to Mr. Carberry, soliciting him to continue her in her husband's place.

The merchant was in the utmost astonishment when he received the application. The idea of such a business being carried on by a woman was so new to him, that at first he was disposed to treat it with ridicule and contempt; but when he came to reflect more coolly upon the matter, it did not appear altogether so strange and wild a scheme as at the first glance, and he determined at least to see the applicant before he gave a decided negative to the application. He read her letter over se-

veral times:—it was written in that style of plain and simple eloquence which always pleads the most forcibly to a plain and unsophisticated understanding. It represented, in strong but natural and artless terms, the desolate situation into which she and her children would be thrown should her petition be rejected; and explained at the same time, with so much correctness and precision, her ideas of the duties belonging to the situation, as to assure him that they were clearly and perfectly understood by her. After weighing well all these things, Mr. Carberry wrote her for answer, that he had a very great respect for the memory of her husband, and was very desirous of doing any thing in his power for the service of his widow and children, and would certainly not appoint any other successor till he had seen and talked with her upon the subject: at the same time he must acknowledge, that the idea of such a charge being consigned to a woman was so new, that he could not determine hastily upon it. He would, however, see her as soon after the funeral of her husband as she could find herself composed enough to receive his visit.

Accordingly, three days after the remains of poor Lawrence were consigned to the earth this visit was made; when, after a long con-

versation, the widow had insinuated herself so far into the merchant's good graces, that his doubts respecting her capacity for what she desired to undertake were greatly diminished, and he consented to her remaining in his service.

CHAPTER X.

A reciprocal second marriage.—Practice not always conformable to precept.—A disclosure of a very astonishing and unexpected nature.—Mutual forgiveness.

In this *service*, however, Eleanor did not very long continue. Mr. Carberry, though he consented to her wishes, still had for a while great difficulty to persuade himself that all things could go on right under female management only. He went frequently, therefore, down to Wandsworth, to assure himself that his affairs were not suffering from an act of compliance which his friends in general complimented by considering as that of a man rapidly hastening into dotage. But at every visit he made he was more and more satisfied with what he had done; he was more and more convinced that his affairs could not be in better hands; and he often told the fair widow that she had given him new ideas with regard to the compass and powers of the female mind.

Mr. Carberry's concerns in trade were very extensive: besides his wharf at Wandsworth, he had one at Deptford, and one in London; and as he had always been extremely attentive to his business, he was known to have accu-

mulated a very considerable fortune. Some years before he had lost a wife of whom he was extremely fond; and having lived ever since nearly in a state of seclusion from society, it was agreed on all hands that he certainly never would marry again: a son, therefore, the only one of several children who survived his mother, was considered as the sole heir to his ample possessions.

But it appeared in the end, that all calculations made upon the idea of either widow or widower not marrying again are very fallacious. The increased respect for female talents with which Eleanor's conduct early began to impress the mind of Mr. Carberry soon produced a further effect. Witnessing so repeatedly the many excellent qualities which she displayed, both of heart and understanding,—her unwearied attention to the numerous cares she had upon her, to the management of his business, to the education of her children, to her household œconomy,—seeing her, in short, fulfil with so much punctuality every duty attendant on her situation, he began to think that he had found a treasure which he could not do better than appropriate to himself. Yet towards one who was so recently a widow decency forbade his acting with precipitation; and it was not till she had entered the third

year of her widowhood that he ventured to open his suit in due form. He then made his proposals on terms the most liberal for herself and her children, offering to adopt them both as his own, and to consider them exactly on the same footing with any children they might have if united.

Had there been no other person's interest but her own involved in these proposals, Eleanor would scarcely have hesitated a moment in rejecting them. She had experienced such a negative kind of happiness in her first marriage, that for herself alone she found little inclination to enter a second time into that state; but such a prospect was here opened for her children, that she could not feel herself justified towards them in giving her answer hastily. To preserve an interest for her son with Mr. Carberry had been her principal object in seeking the situation which had led to this offer; and by the rejection of it the merchant might perhaps be so much piqued, that the protection he had hitherto extended to her and her family might be withdrawn; and would not her children, in such a case, have great reason hereafter to reproach her with having missed so favourable an opportunity of procuring them a comfortable and respectable establishment in the world?

Yet, on the other hand, she had so often condemned herself, in her former marriage, for having engaged in it from other motives than attachment to the man, and had felt the duties annexed to her situation so much more a task than a pleasure, wanting the affection she ought to have had for her husband, that it seemed wholly inexcusable to form a second marriage upon grounds not very dissimilar. Her first was formed under the idea of serving her brother, and to attain that object she had not considered that she was doing an injustice to the man she married. If she should accept the proposals now made to her, it would be more on account of the advantages they held out to her children, than from personal attachment to Mr. Carberry, and she should perhaps be guilty of equal injustice.

It might be said that there were circumstances in the present case, which made an essential difference between that and the former. When she married Lawrence Middleton, they were both young, both at an age when the heart and affections are warm, and when that kind of ardour in the feelings of two persons towards each other which we call *love* is expected to be most awake in the bosom. It was this feeling which Lawrence Middleton had a right to expect in the woman who united her-

self to him; and it was this which Eleanor reproached herself with never experiencing towards him. But both Mr. Carberry and herself were now past the age when any thing like enthusiastic attachment is to be expected. The motives of his proposals probably were, that he thought her a woman likely to make a respectable mistress of a family, one who would attend duly to all his household concerns, and be a friend to whom he could look with confidence, as the prudent sharer of his prosperity, or his comfort and support in case of adversity. If such were his ideas, she had sufficient esteem and respect for his character, to assure herself that she could act conformably to them, could fulfil all his expectations,—and that she might therefore, without self-reproach, accept a situation, to which, for the sake of her children, she felt very much inclined.

But in the present instance there was not the same objection, as in the former, against her having recourse to the advice which she always wished to have on every occasion. She therefore wrote to her brother, expressing an earnest desire to consult him upon a subject of great importance to herself and her children, and requested, if he could spare her the time, that he would come up to talk it over with her;—it would be much more satisfactory to

her, she said, if they could discuss the matter together in a friendly conversation, than to mention it to him by letter. Mr. Armstrong lost no time in obeying the summons, and arrived a few days after at Wandsworth.

It was now that Eleanor first laid open to her brother every secret of her heart, that she made him a frank confession of the motives by which her conduct with respect to both their marriages was influenced;—it was now that he first learned from her own mouth, that she had rather been not unhappy than happy in her marriage, that he was assured by herself that her principal motive for accepting Lawrence Middleton was the hope of rendering him a service which would in some small degree repay the obligations she owed him.

When he had heard her story:—"Eleanor," he said, "I have often in my conversations with you, while I considered you yet as a child under my care, whose mind I was to form and direct to the practice of virtue,—I have often on these occasions inculcated upon you, as one of your great leading principles of action, to be open and sincere in your dealings with your fellow-creatures, and above all carefully to avoid dissimulation towards those with whom you were the most closely connected. There is nothing more dangerous to domestic

peace and happiness, than to act, even from the best motives, underhand, or with disguise, towards those for whom we entertain a regard. Through mistaken ideas of delicacy we often give deep and lasting wounds to our best friends, when we were perhaps endeavouring the most strenuously to avoid it ;—whereas by a well-timed sincerity the wound might have been wholly avoided ; or, if not, at least have been inflicted in such a manner as to give comparatively little pain ; and even that little might have been more easily assuaged, and much sooner recovered.

"I have always thought that the closer the connection, the more dangerous was disguise, and I have found it practically so :—for, Eleanor, it is now my turn to confess, that while inculcating sincerity so strongly upon you, I was myself, like too many preachers, acting in direct contradiction to my own precepts. The whole affair to which you have alluded, was a too sad illustration of the truth of what I have advanced ;—we were each striving who should act with the greatest delicacy towards the other, and we refined till we all acted in a manner little conducive to the happiness of any of us : whereas, if we had had resolution enough to take sincerity only as our guide, much of the uneasiness we have since suffered

from the want of it might have been avoided. —Now listen to my story.

" When you first disclosed to me poor Sophia's secret attachment, I think I quitted you with this exclamation,—*Eleanor, you know not how much you have distressed me!*—I say that I *think* these were my words, for I cannot be sure of them,—my heart was so oppressed that I scarcely knew what I said. I was not indeed suffering in my health, as poor Sophia was, from an unfortunate attachment; but I had been for some days labouring under a secret uneasiness of mind, which I was afraid you must have discovered notwithstanding all the pains I took to conceal it;—which I think you certainly would have penetrated, but that your mind was so entirely occupied at that time by another idea, that it was for the moment blinded to every thing else. Yes, Eleanor, my heart had been very long engaged, though from motives of delicacy to you and your sisters I had kept my attachment a secret from you.

" You probably remember seeing Mr. Anderson when he came to Langham with the funeral of his relation Mr. Worledge, my predecessor in that rectory; and you have often heard me say how much he had been my friend while I was at college. At his earnest invi-

tation I had passed the whole vacation with him, at the house of his mother near Ludlow, the summer before my father died, and had gone thither again the next summer with the same intention; when the death of my father, very soon after my arrival at Mrs. Anderson's, carried me away to Winstanton in a hurry, whence, after a fortnight's stay there, I returned to college.

" While under the hospitable roof of Mrs. Anderson, I became acquainted with a lady whose beauty was the subject of universal admiration in the neighbourhood; but the accomplishments of her heart and mind were to me far more attractive than even those of her person. 'Tis useless, however, to dwell on either; it is sufficient to say that my heart was very soon wholly captivated by them, and I thought there appeared good reason to hope that I was not disagreeable to her. Yet it seemed out of the question immediately to disclose my sentiments; I was young, and my prospect of being able to fulfil any engagement I might enter into, not very flattering. I know not, however, what might have been the consequence, if I had stayed out a second summer, in the habit of seeing her as frequently as the former. But the same occurrence which shortened my stay at Mrs. Anderson's,

altered my situation essentially, and led to my entering into a fixed determination not to think of forming any matrimonial connection while my sisters had no other protector but myself. My conscience would eternally have reproached me, if I had suffered selfish feelings to gain such an ascendancy in my mind, as to hurry me into a measure which would have deprived me of the power of discharging duties to which I seemed called by the voice of Heaven itself; —duties to which inclination moreover urged me in no slight degree, though perhaps truth demands the acknowledgement, that the other inclination had then the more powerful sway over my bosom.

" Thus circumstanced, I could not think of proposing to tie the object of my affections by an engagement which there was so little hope of fulfilling, and I therefore never opened my heart to her. I wished to leave her free,—I wished the sentiments which we entertained for each other, and which I certainly flattered myself were reciprocal, to be the only tie between us, that, if any alteration in the sentiments of either should take place, there might be no danger of our coming together at last with alienated hearts. Yet at the same time I must own, that I thought my sentiments towards her were too obvious to be mistaken,

and that hers were sufficiently responsive to prevent her hastily entering into any other engagement; and I could scarcely suffer myself to entertain a doubt that, whenever I should be able to open my mind to her more explicitly, I should find her still unshackled, still disposed to give a favourable answer. I only imparted my secret wishes to a friend, the near neighbour of the lady, begging him to let me hear of her frequently through him, as long as I should find it necessary to suspend making my proposals in due form. These things, however, I resolved never to communicate to my sisters, because I wished to spare them the mortification which I thought they would feel if they considered themselves as obstacles in the way of my happiness;—the something like a humiliating situation in which they would be placed, if they should be suffered to appear in their own eyes as objects of toleration only to their brother, standing in the way of his views, yet whom from compassion he would not remove.

"As long as the friend whom I had commissioned to write to me remained in that part of the world, he was punctual in keeping up the correspondence, and I had the satisfaction of hearing from him that the lady still remained at liberty; that she had even, to

the great surprise of the neighbourhood, refused several offers which were considered as very advantageous ones; and that every body speculated very much what could occasion such a fine young woman to take the strange resolution, as she apparently had done, never to marry. To me this intelligence was highly gratifying; I saw in it additional reason to flatter myself that we understood each other, and that every thing would end at last according to my wishes.

"But after awhile this friend, taking a sudden inclination to go into the army, purchased a commission in a regiment which was soon after sent abroad, and thus I lost the means of hearing of the lady through him. Still, however, I had occasional opportunities of hearing of her, and knowing that she remained single, —I had even heard so but a very short time before the marriage of our eldest sister. That event, and the death of poor Fanny, made so great a change in my situation, that my fraternal duties now appeared no longer incompatible with following the inclination of my heart. Since you, Eleanor, were become my only remaining charge, I thought that I could, consistently with the attention still due to you, take other ties upon me; that it was a very different thing, one sister remaining with me as

a married man, and three:—I only wished to be assured that the lady was still at liberty, before I mentioned the subject to you, and declared myself in form to her.

"This intelligence I thought I could procure by means of a channel through which important reasons had hitherto prevented my seeking it; but these reasons subsisting no longer, I was resolved to avail myself of it. I had indeed actually begun writing the letter which I considered as the first step towards the completion of my happiness, when all my hopes were in a moment blasted by reading in the newspaper the marriage of this very lady with a gentleman of large fortune in the neighbourhood, whose name, though not his person, was very well known to me. Fain would I have persuaded myself, when first the dreadful news met my eyes, that it could not be true; I read it over and over again, half hoping that I must have deceived myself: but the more I examined it the more reason I found to entertain no doubt upon the subject; the paragraph was inserted in a manner so circumstantial, that it was evident it must have been sent by the parties themselves.

"O Eleanor! how rejoiced was I, amid the shock I received on this occasion, that you were then spending the day at Ambresbury, so

that I might have some hours to recover myself before I was to see you again! Yet, notwithstanding all the pains I took to varnish over the chagrin and uneasiness which I felt inwardly preying upon me, I was afraid that it was impossible you should not perceive some traces of it on my countenance, and anxiously inquire concerning the cause. Happy was I to find myself a better dissembler than I had hoped, to find no such inquiries made, for the cause I was resolved not to disclose;—I could not bear the idea of wounding you by a recital from which it would appear that you, in conjunction with your sisters, had been the occasion of a disappointment which I felt so cruelly.

"My first impulse on reading this intelligence was to have written the lady a letter full of reproaches; but as I revolved in my mind the situation in which we stood towards each other, this idea was immediately checked; for how could I consider myself authorized to make her conduct, whatever it might be, the subject of my reproaches? I wished to leave her free. I had done so; and in the step she had taken, she had only availed herself of the freedom which I had studiously reserved to her, to follow her own inclinations. If they were adverse to my happiness, this might be a

sufficient cause of regret to me, but it was no just subject of reproach to her.

"A very few days only had passed after I received this severe mortification, when you opened your heart to me on the subject of your friend's attachment, and sufferings from it. Judge what a state my mind was in for listening to such a disclosure! judge what a conflict, under the circumstances in which I was then placed, it must necessarily raise in my bosom! Scarcely breathing from the first shock of a disappointment which came upon me the more severely after having been for so many years buoyed up by hope, what a moment was this to listen to suggestions of engaging myself in other ties! Eleanor, you cannot wonder that my heart was too much overpowered to enter further on the subject at that moment, or that I was unable even to remain with you. I felt almost suffocated between the emotions struggling in my bosom, and my endeavours to suppress them, and could only be relieved by being left awhile wholly to myself. Taking my hat therefore I went out, hardly knowing at first whither my steps were directed, or what I was seeking;—yet under the open canopy of heaven I seemed to breathe more freely; it seemed a relief to me to fly from the society of others, and commune with my own heart only. When

I was sufficiently removed from observation, I fell on my knees and implored the Almighty Being who knew my heart, and how much I wished to act in all things conformably to his will, that he would be pleased to assist me in the decision I had now to make, that he would direct me how to regulate my conduct under circumstances the most embarrassing in which I had ever been placed! and I felt my bosom relieved by the ejaculation.

"It is certain that the idea of forming any matrimonial connection was at that moment revolting to me. Of the woman who alone had ever possessed my affections I was deprived;—deprived too at the very moment when I had first dared to hope that my wishes were likely to be speedily accomplished: but my heart, yet unalienated from her, shrunk from the very idea of another occupying the place which she had held in it. Yet you had presented a picture to my imagination from which I almost equally shrunk,—that of Sophia falling a victim to an ill-fated attachment to me: could I, ought I to suffer this? But what then? should I not render myself even more culpable by engaging my faith to her as a husband, while my heart was so estranged from her, than by leaving her to sink into the grave, when the receiving that plighted faith

could alone rescue her from it? Besides, Eleanor, I will freely own, that having been her instructor, having seen her always as the intimate friend of my sister, I had been accustomed to consider her so much in the light of a sister too, that the idea of becoming her husband presented itself at first to my imagination, almost in the light of an unlawful connection. Yet this could be only the passing idea of the moment, one which was dismissed almost as soon as entertained, by a few moments of cool reasoning and sober reflection.

"It is needless to dwell at large upon the debate, the conflict, which took place in my bosom between disinclination to the union which had been suggested to me, on the one side, and the horror I felt on the other at being the occasion of misery to any human being;—and misery I supposed, from what I had just heard, poor Sophia had long suffered, and was still suffering, on my account. It is sufficient to turn our retrospect to the result;—that, Eleanor, is well known to you;—compassion was victorious over every other feeling; and having determined from motives of compassion to make Sophia my wife, the same motives determined me never, during her life at least, to reveal the sentiments I had entertained for another;—and this, Eleanor, is the first time I

ever have mentioned them. It seemed necessary to her repose, that she should be encouraged in the belief, that if she had not deeply interested my heart, yet that at least that heart was free from any other attachment ;—and this delusion I ever sought to cherish. Yet I am afraid even here that my false delicacy failed of attaining the desired end. Whether the idea was only suggested by my own consciousness of the true state of my heart, or whether it was really well founded, it is impossible now to determine ; but I was always haunted with the apprehension that she was not altogether satisfied upon the subject, and feared that she was not so dear to me as she wished, and as every wife ought to be to her husband :—nay, I have more than once suspected that these fears preyed upon her health after marriage, as much as hopeless attachment had previously done.

"Oh, how often, Eleanor! have I, in reflecting upon these things, been induced to think that, even with regard to her, as well as ourselves, the result might have been happier, had we all acted with more openness and sincerity! If I had explicitly declared my sentiments and wishes to the lady who had engaged my affections, and opened my heart freely to my sisters, it is probable that the one

might readily have consented to wait for the completion of our union till I found myself more at liberty from other ties; and that the others would have been reasonable enough to make themselves easy in their situation, till some favourable opportunity of changing it might be presented. At least I have very good reason to suppose that the lady would have consented, as far as she was concerned, to wait for more propitious circumstances, as I have been informed that she rather accepted the man to whom she was united, from being overpersuaded to it by her relations, than from any apparent inclination of her own; and it is certain that he had been before repeatedly refused by her. However this may be, the marriage has turned out, as I am well informed, a most unfortunate one to her; and this has only aggravated the uneasiness and self-reproach which have ever attended my reflections upon my own conduct throughout this unhappy affair. To Sophia, the knowledge that her passion was lavished upon an object by whom it could never be returned, might have operated as an incitement to exert her resolution in combating it; while you, Eleanor, understanding the true state of my heart, would not so rashly have engaged yourself to Mr. Middleton, under the

idea of relieving me from a charge with which I found myself embarrassed.

"Nay, who can say whether another effect that has arisen from this unfortunate affair, one at least that I know not how to ascribe to any other cause, might not then have been prevented? I cannot but fear that it was this which lost me the regard of one of the best friends I ever had in the world;—he doubtless considers my conduct as having been faulty towards this lady, and no longer feels the same esteem for me that he once had:—but if he knew my heart, he would see that it is my judgement only which has erred,—that I may have been mistaken in the course which I pursued, but that my intentions were never otherwise than honourable towards her."

Eleanor listened with profound astonishment to the confession here made by her brother. Though always but too well assured that his affection for Sophia was far from being equal to hers for him, yet that he had any other attachment, was an idea of which she had never entertained the remotest suspicion. Here was indeed a most fatal illustration of the danger of acting with disguise towards our friends, even from the purest motives,—such an one as she never dreamt of hearing from her brother, yet such an one as scarcely any body but himself

could have given, for scarcely any other person would have thought of making the sacrifice which had occasioned it.

While she could not but lament and regret the effect, as little could she withhold her admiration from the motive; and looking earnestly at him she exclaimed, "Oh, my brother! what is it you tell me!—Yes, indeed, we have all been justly punished for our want of ingenuousness towards each other!—Why am I forced in admiring to condemn you, in acknowledging—with feelings of the utmost gratitude acknowledging—your kindness, to call you still unkind? But say, Bernard,—inculcating upon me in the strong terms you so frequently used, the importance of acting with sincerity towards all mankind, particularly towards those with whom I was the most nearly connected,—inculcating these precepts so strongly upon me,—was it possible for me to suppose that you were acting with any reserve towards us?—My dear, dear Bernard, excuse me if I observe, that since I saw in every other instance such an exact conformity between your precepts and your practice,—since I saw your conduct such a remarkable illustration of the virtues you recommended,—it was the more difficult for me to conceive that in a single instance they could be at variance. In any other

than yourself, I might have been led to attribute your coldness with regard to so amiable a girl as Sophia, to attachment to another woman. But it was too gratifying to my vanity to suppose myself the confident of your inmost thoughts, for the idea ever to obtrude itself, that you could permit me to be an obstacle to the completion of any wish of yours, yet suffer me to remain wholly ignorant that such was my actual situation."

"Eleanor, I acknowledge the justice of your reproach, and believe me that my conduct in this instance has been the source of greater self-condemnation to me than *almost any other*,—I believe I might say positively than *any other* act of my life. The man who falls into error from the absence of right principles, I consider as far less deserving of censure, than he who, entertaining right principles, acts in opposition to them. Of this offence,—an offence equally against God and my fellow-creatures,—I feel that I was guilty, and I have been justly punished for it. It has been the occasion of my being condemned to see the woman I loved, and by whom I was beloved, rashly throw herself away upon a man whom subsequent events have shown totally undeserving of her; and a sister, than whom none was ever dearer to a brother, if not absolutely throw herself away,

yet marry in a manner little conformable to her inclinations. But if my error was great, so have been my sufferings and repentance:—may this satisfy the Fountain of all justice! may it have atoned my errors in this world! may they not be remembered against me in the next!—And now, Eleanor, can you forgive me?"

Never had Eleanor's heart been so touched before. There was something in the confession she had heard from one so adored, so revered,—in the seeing how little even the best of human beings are exempted from the errors and failings of our nature,—which affected her beyond measure. But if the finding that this revered object was but a human being sunk deeply into her soul, his contrition and self-condemnation for a fault, which to the world, where disguise and insincerity often pass rather for virtues than for failings, will appear very venial;—his deep contrition for this error, rendered him still dearer to her, since it unfolded a virtue, of which otherwise she might never have been sensible. She now saw that while no one was more lenient,—showed more candour towards the errors and failings of others,—the *errors* and *failings* let it be understood, not the confirmed *vices* and *depravities*,—while to those of others he extended the utmost candour, it was his own errors alone that he con-

demned with severity. While he severely arraigned himself, he spared any remarks upon her conduct, though that had not been marked with all the sincerity towards him that it ought to have been.

"Forgive you, Bernard!" she exclaimed: "could my own errors ever hope for forgiveness,—could I ever dare to ask it of the Power by whom we are all to be judged,—if from my soul I did not forgive you?—if my heart could feel any alteration in the sentiments it has always cherished towards you?—We have all erred;—I have as much reason to ask forgiveness of the shade of my departed husband, if such a being may be supposed to exist in a state sensible to what is passing here below; as you have to ask forgiveness of me.—Nay, I have as much reason to ask forgiveness of you too,—for what right had I to think of imposing a wife upon you? I had seen enough to have convinced me that Sophia could not be the woman of your choice: your behaviour to her was indeed always like a brother, not as if you could ever feel for her more than fraternal friendship. But, Bernard, I acted under an infatuation; my mind was possessed but with one idea, that you and Sophia must be happy together; nor did it ever enter into my head to ask myself whether it was not possible that you might have some

other attachment. In short, I was exactly in that state of mind that I could not persuade myself, even when I saw how much you seemed to revolt from an union with Sophia, that you really could feel repugnance to it; the infatuation I was under deprived me absolutely of the use of my senses."

They both paused, their hearts were both overcome;—Eleanor first resumed the power of speech.—"But," she said, "let not the lesson we have had, be thrown away upon us:—we all acted too disingenuously; let us take warning from the consequences to avoid such false ideas of delicacy in future!—I now see plainly the path which I ought to pursue in the present case, and it shall be pursued. I will not trifle with Mr. Carberry as I did with poor Lawrence;—he shall not be made a sacrifice to the convenience of one whom he has honoured with such particular distinction, or be wedded, by me at least, from other motives than those which a husband has a right to expect from a wife. I know that prudential motives alone would influence me to marry Mr. Carberry: I will not be a second time guilty of such an act of injustice, but will without delay return a negative answer to his proposals."

"Not so, Eleanor: this were again to act with

too much precipitation.—I will see him, will talk with him; he shall be made thoroughly acquainted with your situation; and if he should then persist in his offers and you should still be disposed to accept them, here will be no deception, nor can any valid objection be urged against their being accepted."

Eleanor saw the justice of this reasoning, and assented to the proposal. Mr. Armstrong accordingly waited upon Mr. Carberry; when every thing being duly explained, the merchant bestowed the highest compliments upon the honourable manner in which both the brother and the sister had acted, and persisting in his suit his hand was in a very short time after united with that of Eleanor.

Mr. and Mrs. Middleton were reasonable enough to see with pleasure the new connection formed by their daughter-in-law, and, instead of regarding it as any slight to the memory of their son, felt grateful at the sacrifice she had made to promote the welfare and happiness of their grandchildren. They neither of them, however, lived to see the whole effect produced by this change in her condition; Mr. Middleton died within a year after Eleanor's marriage, and Mrs. Middleton survived her husband barely two years.

CHAPTER XI.

Consolatory views opened after long sustained apprehensions.—Grateful acknowledgements of kindnesses received.—Mercantile virtues and foibles.—New figures of oratory.—Objects of paternal solicitude.—The juvenile visitor.—Terrors of a country walk.

AFTER having been kept on the rack for three or four years, by the bitterest apprehensions that my ideas would never rise above the low station in which I was born, my father at length had the satisfaction of seeing more consolatory views open upon him. A gradual change of sentiment had been evidently for some time stealing over my mind,—it appeared obvious that I was beginning to entertain more accurate and gentlemanlike notions respecting the difference between the learned professions and mere mechanical occupations. I had no longer the same pleasure in attending at the shop when he was at work; I no longer entreated permission, as I had often done in my days of devotion to his art, to come and blow the bellows, as a prelude towards being admitted into the *sanctum sanctorum* of the mysteries. To have been deprived of my

company upon any less important consideration, highly as he had always valued it, would have been to him a very sensible mortification: but now he even rejoiced in it, considering it as a happy earnest of my mind being in a prosperous train towards casting the slough by which it had been so long dimmed and disguised, and being about to come forth with that bright lustre and polish which had ever been the object of his most ardent wishes.

Indeed, as the delight I received from the society of Mr. Armstrong and Wălter daily increased,—as I was daily more and more enraptured with the knowledge I imbibed under the tuition of the former,—all other propensities were propórtionably weakened in my mind;—to enjoy their society became, insensibly, all in all to me. Admiration of the man, and of the extent and variety of his attainments, the latter of which I could every day more duly appreciate, as he was every day imparting some portiòn of them to me, naturally lĕd to emulation; and even before I went to Christ's Hospital I was fully convinced that greater talents were requisite to make a sermon than to shoe a horse, and grew more ambitious of emulating the achievements of Mr. Armstrong than those of my father.

It was just before I completed my twelfth

year that I was removed to the Hospital. Eleanor had then been a widow about half a year. She was no stranger to the kindness shown me by her brother, and to his anxiety that I should not disappoint my father's expectations,—so that she knew her taking notice of me would be satisfactory to him: she therefore gave me a general invitation to spend the day with her at Wandsworth, whenever I had a holiday and could obtain leave to come so far. Of this invitation I availed myself on every possible opportunity; and I often look back to the happy hours I spent there, with feelings of mingled gratitude and delight. I soon grew extremely fond of both her children; but it was the society of Katherine her daughter, who was the older of the two, and just a year younger than myself, that was always more particularly gratifying to me. She was lively and animated, and enjoyed an occasional game at romps as much as most girls of her age: but at the same time she had a great desire of instruction, and was extremely fond of reading; so that we alternately read and played together as the fancy of the moment inspired us. Bernard, the son, had a far less active mind;—he was sweet-tempered, but did not enter with the same ardour as Katherine, either into our sports or studies.

I was not a less welcome guest at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Carberry after Eleanor became a second time a wife, than I had been at that of Mrs. Lawrence Middleton during the time of her widowhood; while I as gladly embraced every possible opportunity of visiting at her new residence in Chatham Place, Black Friars, as I had done at her old residence at Wandsworth. It was Mr. Carberry's particular wish and desire that his wife should please herself entirely both in keeping up her old connections and in forming new ones; and if I did not find the instruction in his society that I did in that of Eleanor and her brother, I had always much reason to be grateful for the notice he took of me, and for the frequent little pecuniary donations with which it was accompanied.

He was indeed in all respects a kind-hearted, friendly, and hospitable man. He had always been indefatigable in his attention to his business, or he had never accumulated the large fortune of which he was now the possessor;—yet this attention to his concerns was maintained without its ever being permitted to degenerate into meanness or avarice. His expenses were proportioned to his means; he was liberal, but not extravagant;—he had a handsome house, and every thing about it substan-

tial and good without being showy, or affecting to follow all the reigning whims and fashions of the day;—he had servants enough to do the business of the house properly, but kept none for idleness or ostentation;—his table was always plentifully served with every thing good of its kind, without running into foolish expenses for the purchase of dainties; and he aimed rather at having a moderate display of wines of the very best quality, than at having a great variety of them; he was kind in all his domestic relations, hospitable to his guests, charitable and benevolent to the poor, and to all who were in any way dependent upon him.

For all these good qualities it was impossible not to respect him; but it was equally impossible to pass over unnoticed one foible which, amid them all, was perpetually obtruding itself upon the view of every body who was much in his society. He was a most profound politician, nor was there perhaps throughout the whole city of London a more assiduous studier of the daily papers; and this was a period of our history at which they were particularly interesting, since it was now the year 1796. I verily believe that he would even sooner have omitted his weekly examination of his books, and they were always laid before him on a Monday morning, and regularly examined by

him;—but I verily believe he would even sooner have waved this ceremony, than have passed over a single syllable in the proceedings of the House of Commons during the time of their sitting. No man was more profuse in his offers of assistance to His Majesty's ministers in settling the affairs of the nation, whether the question was of conducting a debate in parliament, or of planning and directing any of the formidable expeditions undertaken by them, either by sea or land. He could always point out the spot against which their exertions could be the most effectually directed;—he was always perfectly well acquainted with the situation, strength, numbers, and resources of the enemy, could always tell exactly where they were the most vulnerable;—and if ministers had but shown as much readiness in taking his advice, as he in giving it, the nation would not have had so often to lament the unfortunate failures which have attended our efforts in this *most just and necessary war.*

Nor was he less liberal in his offers of assistance to the commanders of the expeditions, whether generals or admirals. Even though, through the negligence of ministers in not consulting him, their efforts were directed to wrong points; still, if the commanders would have been more attentive to his advice, the

errors of which they were guilty would have been avoided; and if the event had not been completely successful, yet their failures would have been attended with consequences less calamitous. At least so he always assured those from whom he could obtain a hearing. For no sooner had an expedition failed of success, than he was ready with his prophecy, observing that he had always said this must be so, and he could have convinced any body in *few words* that it was impossible such a plan should succeed; but if such and such measures had been pursued, which he had pointed out, the event would have been very different. Or, in the case of partial success, the commander, whether by sea or land, might have done the business much more effectually, if he would only have done so and so, as he had proposed.

But woe unto any one who was doomed to listen to the *few words* requisite for his conviction! At these moments, the worthy merchant, seated directly before the fire, with both his feet upon the fender, and the poker in his hand,—for the hearth and fire were always his field of action,—would trace out his plan of a campaign, draw up his armies for an engagement, or arrange his ships in line of battle, with so much ability, and fight with so much obstinacy, that there was no possibility of con-

jecturing when the engagement might terminate. It was well for him that he could consume a large quantity of coals without feeling the expense materially, for the fire was always upon these occasions a severe sufferer. Was he making an impetuous charge of cavalry, or playing off a furious cannonade of artillery,—was he rushing with irresistible force upon the enemy with fixed bayonets, or pouring a broadside from the admiral's ship which was to sink an opponent,—in whatever manœuvre he was engaged, the fire was to answer for every thing, the coals were raked out of the grate as fast as the artillery mowed down the ranks of the enemy.

Was the arrangement of a debate in the House of Commons the question, he fought with no less eagerness the battles of the Foxites and the Pittites than those of the armies of France and England. He did not enforce his arguments by similes, by tropes, by metaphors, or any of those common-place ornaments of rhetoric,—they were illustrated by emphatically thrusting the poker into the fire, and stirring out a volley of the luminous figures contained in it. And when at length, by dint of raking half the fire out, he had obtained a complete victory over his opponent, (for he always imagined what his antagonist would say, for the

pleasure of refuting him,) the victory was celebrated by throwing a whole scuttle full of coals upon the fire, that he might be prepared with a plentiful supply of ammunition to renew the contest, in case he should find any fresh argument for his adversary to bring against him, or should be able to raise a new army for the enemy to march into the field.

Some persons may perhaps be disposed to call in question the patriotism of our merchant, when they hear that he was not only always ready to fight the battles of his own country, but was equally alert in fighting those of her enemies. He had as quick a foresight at the failure of any plan of the ministers or generals of another country, as of those of England, and was no less liberal of his counsels how to avoid like errors in future. He could equally have instructed Djezzar Pasha and Sir Sidney Smith how they might have destroyed Bonaparte and his whole army in Syria, and have instructed Bonaparte how he might have taken St. Jean d'Acre;—nor was he less lavish in his consumption of coals in the cause of an adversary of Great Britain, than in that of her closest and most faithful allies. Nay, he would even go a step further in the service of other countries:—since they are not so happy as England in having a parliament wherein the

measures of the unfortunate ministers and commanders may be canvassed and censured, and those of the fortunate ones be honoured with a vote of thanks, he kindly supplied the deficiency by supposing what might be said if they had parliaments. He furnished the speakers on both sides with the most able arguments that could be brought in support of their respective opinions; and had not less cause of triumph when he had silenced an adversary in one of these imaginary parliaments, than when he had disposed of imaginary arguments in the real parliament of England. It must however be confessed to his credit, that while he loved to harangue, and was eager in supporting his own views of all political questions, he never made a difference of opinion a subject of quarrel with any one:—indeed, as he seldom would allow an interval for any body to put in a word after he had entered upon his harangue, all disputes upon the matter were effectually avoided.

It may perhaps be hence supposed that Mr. Carberry was a great City orator, and a distinguished speaker whenever a question of importance was agitated in a common hall, or a meeting of the common council:—no such thing. His oratory was confined entirely to his own fire-side; nor would it, I believe, have

been possible for him to maintain an argument with any spirit without the poker in his hand. So essential a figure of rhetoric did it indeed seem to him, that even in summer time, when there was no fire to rake, I have seen him, if very earnest in debate, instinctively take up the poker and run it between the bars of the grate, with as much eagerness as if he could actually have poured out a volley of hot balls upon the enemy below in the hearth.

I have the rather dwelt upon this foible, because to that was probably to be ascribed an error into which he fell, and which led to very important consequences; at least the one was so intimately connected with the other, that they form too much links of the same chain for the notice of them to be dissevered; and both are too much connected with the present history, to be passed over unnoticed. Though he was contented that his own oratory should be confined within the narrow limits of his fire-side, and be listened to only by the little circle of his private friends, it was far from his intention that his son should remain in a sphere equally circumscribed. He was indeed, in regard to him, in the same situation that my honoured sire was with respect to me. The father of Maurice Carberry could as little endure that the family name which he bore

should be never known but as connected with the coal trade, as the father of Samuel Danville that his family name should be for ever attached to the idea of the bellows and the hammer. Maurice must equally with myself be raised a step above his ancestors;—he must be made a gentleman of independent fortune, and a parliamentary orator; and in this situation Mr. Carberry looked forward to the most important services being rendered to the country by the united efforts of his son and himself. The latter could then communicate to the admiring audience of St. Stephen's chapel all the beneficial projects formed in behalf of Old England by himself amid his daily lucubrations in Chatham Place; and persuasive as he was convinced his son's eloquence must necessarily be, he had no doubt that recommended by him they would be adopted without hesitation.

Maurice Carberry had indeed been placed at a school in the neighbourhood of London, which was selected entirely with this view. It was one which had the reputation of making the pupils elegant classical scholars, of paying particular attention to their learning to speak and write English correctly, and to declaim with ease and fluency. It was, in short, considered as one of the best seminaries of the whole kingdom for educating youths of fortune

to unite the characters of the orator, the scholar, and the gentleman. Mr. Carberry at the time of placing him there made known his views, and gave a particular charge that the utmost attention should be paid in his education to such objects as would best promote them.

At the time of his father's second marriage Maurice was just sixteen years of age, having been already eight years at school. As he was well known in the school to be the only son of a very rich man, he had been much courted and flattered,—by nobody more than by the master himself, who had a very profound respect for wealth and distinction. He indeed wrote such flourishing accounts of the progress made by the youth in his studies, that Mr. Carberry, not without some reason, considered his son almost as a prodigy. He might, perhaps, not so easily have been the dupe of these flattering expressions, but that, not being a man of learning himself, he had no sufficient means of forming an accurate judgement of their truth, he was forced to take them entirely upon credit: possibly he might, with true paternal frailty, be very ready to believe, without examination, what accorded so well with his partialities and his wishes.

In some of Mr. Carberry's numerous visits to Wandsworth, while his mind was not yet wholly

satisfied that his concerns could be going on well, superintended by a woman only, and of the not less numerous ones subsequently made from the new motives for wishing to see Mrs. Middleton, which arose out of the conviction that the old ones were unfounded,—on several occasions in the course of these visits he had, in the pride of his heart, brought his son with him, very much I am afraid, if the truth is to be confessed, for the sake of showing him off. It so fell out that on one of these occasions I happened to be spending the day there. It was about a year after I first came to the hospital, I being then thirteen and Maurice fifteen. When Mr. Carberry and his son entered, I was reading to Mrs. Middleton and Katherine as they sat at work, and Bernard was finishing his task of writing. Mr. Carberry had seen me before, and knew my history; he wished, I suppose, for a tête-à-tête with the widow, for he had not been long seated before he recommended to the young people all to go and take a walk. I saw Maurice eye me from head to foot; and had I known him as well then as I knew him afterwards, I should certainly have interpreted his contemplations:—"What! walk out with a blue-coat boy!—must I be seen in such company?" He eyed me, but stirred not; on which Mr. Carberry repeated his re-

commendation to us to take a walk; when he rose from his seat reluctantly, and with great state, and taking his hat we all sallied forth.

"Which way shall we go?" said Katherine.

"Any way you please, Miss Middleton," said Maurice: "I don't imagine there will be time to take a long walk; suppose we only stroll a little about the yard?"

"I think we shall be soon tired of that," said I, perfectly unconscious of Maurice's delicate feelings on the subject of being seen in my company; while he, not caring to avow them in plain and direct terms, could only repeat that he thought his papa did not mean to stay long, and we had better not be out of the way.

This objection, however, was overruled by Katherine, who observed, "that as Mr. Carberry himself proposed our walking, it wasn't likely he should be in a hurry;" and pursuing her way towards the gate of the yard, Maurice saw no means of escaping the purgatory in store for him, but was obliged to follow, and exhibit himself in the public road with me by his side.

"Pray, sir, what may your name be?" he said, addressing himself to me.

"Danville, sir."

"Oh!—and I suppose, mester Denville, by your dress, that you are at Christ's hospital?"

"Yes, sir."

“ 'Tis a mighty ugly dress, I must needs think.”

“Dear me!” said Katherine, “I am quite surprised, master Carberry, you should think so: for my part, I think it uncommonly pretty, and very becoming.”

“You amaze me, Miss Middleton; I can't think you can be serious.”

“O indeed I am quite serious.”

“I must say, then, that I think you've a vestly bad taste.” Then addressing himself again to me, “I've a notion, mester Denville,” said he, “that there's a sad vulgar set of boys at your hospital. Indeed who but vulgar people could send their sons to a place where they must wear such a dress?”

I never in my life felt more strongly disposed to apply corporal correction, and that in a pretty rough way, to the shoulders of either boy or man, than I now did to those of Maurice Carberry for his overbearing impertinence. I was indeed so confounded, and so indignant, that no other species of answer immediately presented itself to my mind; and not feeling myself wholly in a situation to make this, which I thought the only proper reply, I merely looked him in the face,—pretty significantly, as I hope and believe,—and was silent. Katherine did more: she answered without hesitation, “Oh dear,

that's quite a mistake; 'tis one of the genteelest schools in all London: isn't it, Samuel?" Maurice proceeded in his catechism:—"You come out of the country, mester Denville, I suppose?"

I was too much occupied with endeavouring to digest the former observation to attend to the present question, so left it to find an answer where it could, and it found one again from my champion Katherine.

"Yes, Samuel was brought up by a brother of mamma's."

"From charity, I suppose?"

"No: my uncle undertook his education because he thought him so extremely clever that he said it was really quite a pleasure to instruct such a boy:—indeed, he always considered himself as extremely obliged to Samuel's father for consenting to his son's being under his care:"—and then she gave me a roguish wink, as much as to say, "I think he is pretty well answered now."

"Dear me!" said Maurice, "that was vestly odd of your uncle.—But what a pity it is, if mester Denville is so exceedingly clever, that he is not sent to a better school. We have such a number of clever boys at our school!—There's the Earl of Borrowdale, he's remarkably clever, and he's my very particular friend: in-

deed the school is quite talked of for the number of clever boys."

"'Tis a remarkable school for good manners, too, isn't it?" said Katherine.

"O dear me, yes indeed it is, Miss Middleton," he replied: "you've no idea what a genteel school it is,—not one vulgar boy there;—not one whose father isn't worth at least three thousand a year. Then there's the Earl of Borrowdale: he has no father alive, but he is immensely rich himself, and has such a very fine house in the country! He has often described it to me, for he's my most intimate friend; and he has invited me to come and visit him when he's of age and lives there. And the countess dowager his mamma is extremely rich, and lives in a very fine house in Portman Square, which will belong to the earl too when he comes of age." Then, after a pause, resuming his examination into my history, "and pray," said he, "what may mester Denville's father be?"

"His father," said Katherine, "Oh, he's a doctor."

"A doctor, dear me! always meddling with nesty drugs."

Amid this agreeable kind of conversation we had pursued our way for some time, when at length we came to the entrance of a lane, down

which I proposed turning. "O dear me, not for the world," said Maurice. "The last time I was here, a friend of mine, who was spending the holidays with me, and I walked down that lane; and there was such a fierce duck in a pond which we passed, that I would not upon any account go there again. I declare I never was so frightened in my life."

"Indeed it was very frightful," said Katherine, winking at me, while I was endeavouring to stifle a laugh; and Bernard looked at him with astonishment. "But which way, then, shall we go?" Katherine added.

"Oh, any way but that," said Maurice.

"Sister," said Bernard, "cou'dn't we go over the fields by Harris's farm, and home by the water side?"

"Why, that's a very pleasant way," said Katherine; "but I've heard that there's a very fierce hen at that farm, and if she should fly out at us! Besides, if we were to tumble into the water as we walk by the side of it, what could we do then?"

"Aye, Miss Middleton's right," said Maurice, "we shall be safer going home again by the road: we might be stopped and robbed, too, in the fields; and I've got three or four guineas in my pocket: that's a trifle to be sure, but it is as well not to run the hazard of losing

it. But Miss Middleton and I can walk home together, and mester Denville can go with mester Middleton whichever way he chooses. I suppose, as mester Denville has been brought up in the country, he has been so used to ducks and hens that he doesn't see any thing to be afraid of in them."

"No, indeed he does not," said Katherine: —"nay, I declare I saw him go directly in the way of ever so many geese, the other day, and he didn't seem the least afraid even of them, though he frightened me out of my wits."

"I suppose that's because he's so extremely clever, he thinks he must not be afraid of any thing."

"Well," said Katherine, "I think master Carberry's right; he and I had better go home together, and you, Samuel, and Bernard, can go by the farm, and I'll tell mamma that you'll be at home presently." Thus we parted:— never was I more glad of any thing in my life than to be released from mester Carberry's impertinence; while he, I believe, was not much less delighted at having shaken off a companion so little to his taste. I made my own remarks to myself in private upon all that had passed, but they were not then communicated to any body: I only assented very heartily to the remark made by little Bernard Middle-

ton, as we pursued our walk together, that he never saw such a fool as master Carberry must be, to be afraid of a duck!

After Mr. Carberry and his son were gone, Katherine and I discussed our walk together; when Katherine expressed a pretty considerable degree of aversion to her late visitor, and said she always contradicted him as much as possible whenever she saw him, he was so disagreeable and so impertinent! This was the only time that I ever saw Maurice before his father had been guilty of a much worse offence than sending him to walk with a blue-coat boy, in presenting him with a mother-in-law.

CHAPTER XII.

First appearance of a new costume in a country village.—A modest tribute of applause where applause was due.—Paternal delight.—A new course of mutual instruction commenced.—Fond ideas cruelly disappointed.—Character of an heir apparent.—Delights of intimacy with the great.

I DID not find Maurice's animadversions upon me and upon my dress very digestible. When I first went up to enter upon my pupilage at the hospital, it was without the least idea of being to adopt any particular costume in my new situation. I had not even any conception of it when I entered the precincts of the hospital, and the costume was presented to my contemplation. My kind benefactor, Mr. Armstrong, was then with me; for, with his accustomed benevolence, he even took the trouble of a journey to London upon the occasion to settle me there, and recommend me particularly to two of the governors with whom he was acquainted. I could not help immediately exclaiming upon the singularity of the dress; and learned, not without a considerable degree of discomposure, and even of mortification, that it was what was worn by all the scholars; and what I must wear during the whole time of my

pupilage, whether residing at the hospital, or visiting at home. However, I consoled myself with the reflection, that, since it was worn by all, no one could laugh at the other; and indeed I found, after a little while, that the dress was so familiar, not only in the school but where-ever I went in London, that it was no subject of remark, and I soon ceased to be at all disturbed by it. But Maurice's remarks rather laid open again the little wound my vanity had received, and I had no inconsiderable argumentations with myself for three or four days, before a perfect reconciliation between me and my *parure* could be established.

It was not very long after, that I went down on a visit to my father, for the first time since my removal to the hospital. The notice taken of me at the rectory at Langham had always excited among the other lads in the village that kind of jealousy which is almost invariably felt, particularly by uncultivated minds, at seeing an equal in rank raised by adventitious circumstances very much above us. The consequence was, that they had been exceedingly in the habit of amusing themselves at my expense,—that I was made the constant object of their ridicule,—the mark at which their country wit and rustic jokes were perpetually aimed;—they always called me in derision *Master Dan-*

ville. But above all my pride, as it was termed, which could find nobody in the parish good enough to keep company with but the parson and his son, was the subject of their very severe animadversions. Not that they ever ventured upon these remarks when they met me in company with Mr. Armstrong and Walter; but they took every possible opportunity of way-laying me when I was by myself, and making me acquainted with their opinions. In general I did not condescend to take further notice of them than to draw up my nose into a sneer expressive of very profound contempt, and pass on. Once only was I roused into expressing my feelings in a more active way. Remarks upon myself were pretty indifferent to me; but when they presumed to say that it must be a rum kind of parson indeed who could take up with such trumpery as a blacksmith's son for his child's companion, my choler could no longer be suppressed. This oblique reflection upon my patron was past all endurance; and though the boy by whom it was made was much older and stouter than myself, indignation supplied all deficiencies of strength, and I gave him as hearty a thrashing as he ever had, or probably ever will have in the course of his life. This was a sufficient hint to the youths in general; and though they

did not the more spare me, I never heard a second reflection upon my benefactor.

But if it be clear from this, that among the lads Mr. Armstrong's kindness to me was made a subject of reflection upon him, it is but justice due to the rest of the parish to observe, that these kind of reflections were confined to the mere lads only. Those who were arrived at years of maturity, and were capable of duly appreciating the character of their rector, always regarded it with the veneration it deserved, nor ever thought of mentioning it but in suitable terms. If the distinction with which I was treated by him, so far above what was shown to any other person in the parish, did occasion any little feelings of jealousy among them, and it was perhaps scarcely possible that it should not, the odium fell entirely upon me, he was not less the object of their sincere love and respect:—if they felt somewhat mortified at the distance I observed towards their children, though I might be arraigned for it as too assuming, yet the notice I received from him, which was in fact the occasion of it, was never imputed to him as improper condescension. Indeed, I have often thought in my more reflecting years, that the manner in which his notice of me was thus passed over, since, perhaps, on viewing only the surface of the thing, it might bear the in-

terpretation of demonstrating rather an invidious partiality, was a remarkable instance of the great ascendancy which a clergyman may obtain over the minds of his parishioners, where his general conduct is such as to render him truly respectable in their eyes;—when by a due discharge of his pastoral duties, and a strict attention to his own morals, he convinces them that religion is not with him a mere matter of outside display, but is his constant and steady rule of action.

But the sentiments of the younger gentry being such as I have described, it was not to be expected that so fine a subject of merriment as my blue gown, black cap, and yellow stockings could be passed over. Never had such a costume been seen in the village before. It was on a Saturday that I came down; and not arriving till after dark, I made my way to my father's house wholly unobserved; so that my first public exhibition of myself was on the Sunday morning, when in my way to the rectory, a little before church time, I passed through the churchyard, where a number of the youths were assembled. At first I was not recognised by them; but when they discovered this grotesque figure, as I appeared to them, to be *master Danville*, never was there such a shout as they all set up; there was no end of their jokes

and sneers.—"So, little master was got back into petticoats again!—they thought that when he went to Lunnun he was to be made a great man of, but now it seemed that 'twas no such thing,—the parson's fine scholar was but a mere baby there:—they supposed that next time he came down he'd have a leading-string, and be put into his go-cart." To all this I replied only with my usual draw-up of my nose, and pursued my route to the rectory very tranquilly, in the full assurance that my reception there would more than compensate to me the mockery of the whole village, or indeed of that and several others united. However, even here I was not wholly exempt from a little bit of mortification at my unfortunate dress; for it tickled Walter's fancy so much, notwithstanding he was in some sort prepared for it, that he could not forbear bursting into a hearty laugh the moment he saw me. I at first drew up my head, and looked a little grave upon the matter; but in a few minutes he irresistibly compelled me to laugh as heartily as himself, and there was an end of it. I do not recollect that the blue gown ever after gave me a moment's uneasiness.

In this, as indeed in all other visits which I made to my father while I remained a student at the hospital, I was received with the same

kindness, I may say affection, at the rectory that I had experienced during the time when I was more immediately under Mr. Armstrong's tuition, and was permitted to come every day and read with him. I was also as much as ever the friend and associate of Walter: he had a mind so perfectly free from pride, and so sweet a temper, that he never entertained the idea of shunning, as he grew up, the child who had been the playmate of his infancy, though in a rank of life so inferior to his own.

I shall only say in general, with respect to the years of my pupilage at the hospital, that they passed with credit to myself; and that I had the satisfaction of finding my conduct meet with the entire approbation of the senior part of the community, while at the same time I lived upon the most pleasant and amicable terms with my schoolfellows. Let me not be accused of vanity in saying this: I claim less merit to myself in it than I would give to Mr. Armstrong. His excellent lessons and advice were always accompanied with expressions of so much kindness, uttered with such appearance of real solicitude for my proving a respectable and useful member of society, and rewarding by a suitable return the exertions my father had made for my education and advancement in life, that I must have been insensible and

ungrateful indeed if they had made no impression upon me.

My father contemplated the progress of my education with a delight that knew no bounds. "Samuel, my dear Samuel," he would sometimes say, "God has rewarded my diligence and endeavours to render thee great and happy, by making thee every thing that my heart could wish; which every night before I lie down in my bed I thank him with all my soul for it, and for all his goodness and mercy that he has blessed you, and made you so good and industrious in your learning; and I pray to him daily that the duty you show me may, in his good time, be equally rewarded by your having a son like yourself, that you may experience all the transports which your good conduct has so often occasioned me. O, if it should but please God to spare me, and let me hear you the first time you preach, I shall then be willing to die whenever he thinks good to call for me: I shall have nothing more left to wish for on this side of the grave; which, to be sure, I think, considering that I am not now old, I may very fairly hope for."

A son who could have witnessed unmoved the heart of a parent agitated with such emotions as at these moments agitated my father's, must have been very unworthy of witnessing

them at all ;—he must indeed have been composed of materials which would bespeak him worthy of any thing rather than of the commendations and blessings bestowed upon him. As I hope, that though much allowance was perhaps to be made for his paternal partiality, yet that I was not wholly unworthy of more qualified commendations, so I could seldom witness them without a deluge of tears, hiding my face at the same time upon his knee; and if the rebel nature within us had ever urged me to wander very widely from the strait path, I think nothing would so soon have brought me back to it as the witnessing one of these scenes. I speak not of those numberless petty errors to which the best among us are at every moment subject, and in which I undoubtedly shared with the rest of my fellow-creatures; but I hope and trust that my heart has ever been *upright, and innocent from great transgressions.* If I must soon confess a very severe mortification which I once occasioned my father, still I think I may say with confidence, that it was the only serious subject of uneasiness I ever gave him; and that it arose from circumstances which, if they could not wholly justify, may at least be pleaded as a partial extenuation of, my conduct.

I have spoken in these general terms of this

period of my life, because the incidents which intervened worth recording are not sufficiently numerous to be given in a regular detail. A few desultory particulars only must be added, partly relating to myself, partly to those with whom I was principally connected, before I proceed to the more important occurrences of several succeeding years.

After Mrs. Carberry's removal to Chatham Place, I had more frequent opportunities of improving the acquaintance between myself and her children begun at Wandsworth; since I could many times obtain leave to go so far, when to have thought of going to Wandsworth was out of the question. Among other objects to which the ardent desire of knowledge, already mentioned as a distinguishing feature in Katherine Middleton's character, led, was an extreme wish of becoming acquainted with the Greek and Latin languages. In French and Italian she had been early instructed by her mother, and could already read them with fluency; and in consequence of Mr. Carberry's desire that she might have the best instruction which could be procured in any accomplishments which her mother wished her to acquire, she was placed under masters to perfect her in both languages. Having communicated to me in private her wish of learning Latin and Greek, I offered to

instruct her in them; and having obtained her mother's consent, the study was immediately commenced. I on the other hand regretting one day to her that I had very little opportunity at the hospital of keeping up my French and Italian, which I had begun to learn under Mr. Armstrong, she offered to be my tutor in them; and thenceforward the greatest part of our time, during any visits that I made in Chatham Place, was devoted by her and myself to mutually giving and receiving instruction. With these lectures I was more and more delighted every time they took place; and I still look back to them as among the happiest moments of my life.

As to Mrs. Carberry herself, it seemed as if all her endeavours to promote the welfare of those with whom she was connected, even by the sacrifice of her own warmest feelings, were destined to be foiled, and only to show the entire futility of all human foresight. She had married in the first instance to promote, as she hoped, the happiness of her brother:—how much she was mistaken in her idea, and how fatally her hopes were frustrated, has been sufficiently shown. She married the second time in the prospect of advantage to her children, rather than to gratify her own inclinations; and ere two years were expired she had the

misfortune of losing one of the objects for whom this sacrifice was made: her son was seized with the scarlet fever, which flying immediately to his throat and head carried him off in a few days. This was a subject of inexpressible grief to her, and scarcely less to Mr. Carberry; for he always behaved to her children, and really seemed to love them as well, as if they had been his own. Thus were blasted all Mrs. Carberry's hopes with regard to her son:—how they were answered with regard to her daughter the sequel will disclose.

About a year before Bernard Middleton's death Mrs. Carberry had become the mother of another son, who was called Edward after his father;—and in two years from his birth her family was further increased by a daughter, to whom she gave the name of Sophia, after the cherished friend of her youth. She had given the name of Katherine to her eldest daughter, because it was that both of her own mother and of Mrs. Middleton. Katherine being just three years younger than Maurice Carberry, it was the general opinion of the world that the marriage of the parents would be succeeded by that of their children, when they should be respectively arrived at the proper ages for such an union.

The speculation was ingenious, and certainly plausible: the young people had ample opportunities of seeing and knowing each other's merits; and it seemed natural enough to suppose that they might be led almost insensibly to forming a mutual attachment. But to Maurice his father's second marriage had been a source of the severest mortification and disappointment; nor could he forbear even, young as he then was, to make use of some expressions to him upon the subject not very consistent with the decorum due from a child to his parent. Nourished so many years in the belief that he was to be the sole and undivided inheritor of his father's large property, he could not bear with any degree of patience the idea, not only that other heirs might be born to his father, who would have a positive claim to divide the inheritance with him, but that the two children of his mother-in-law, who could not urge any *claim* whatever upon the property, were, through the foolish fondness of the husband for this new connection, to be placed upon the same footing as if they were his own. Maurice could never, therefore, contemplate the new head of his father's house but with an eye of secret jealousy and chagrin; yet Mrs. Carberry's conduct was such as to command from him an involuntary show of outward re-

spect, how much soever it might be revolting to his real sentiments: and this sort of awe of her controlled him so far as to prevent his ever showing any active enmity towards her children. Entertaining, however, such sentiments as those above described, he could not learn without a satisfaction, which, perhaps, if he had been upon the spot he would have found it difficult wholly to disguise even to her, that he was relieved from one of the objects of his jealousy by the death of Bernard Middleton. Where he could venture to speak plainly, he did not attempt to varnish over his delight; and if he did not speak in terms equally direct with regard to Katherine, enough was said to show very clearly that he would much rather follow her to the tomb than lead her to the altar.

My first introduction to Maurice had certainly not been attended with circumstances that prejudiced me very much in his favour, nor did any subsequent interviews contribute towards removing the impression which I then received. As his holidays were usually spent at home, I occasionally saw him at these times, during the two years that he remained at school after his father's marriage, and in the vacations after he was removed to college; but indeed our interviews were *seeing* each

other only. He had by some means, I do not know what, obtained more accurate information concerning my origin than he received from Katherine, and knew now what sort of a doctor my father was; that he was not even so honourable a member of the Æsculapian art as to be *always meddling with nesty drugs*;—that his intercourse with drugs was but small,—that he was much more familiar with iron. Knowing me then to be but the son of a blacksmith, and seeing me in that dress by which he had been already so much annoyed, a condescending "How do you do, *mester Denville*," and after a while "*Mr.* Denville," when we met, and a formal "Good morning" or "Good night to you, Mr. Denville," at parting, was commonly the sum total of the conversation which passed between us during perhaps four or five hours that we remained in the room together; and even these ordinary salutations of civility from one so much my superior he seemed to regard as no small degree of condescension.

But the distance he chose to preserve in this respect could not prevent my making my private observations upon, and forming my own judgement of, this future parliamentary orator; and the result of these observations was, that in due time I had imbibed as large a

share of contempt for him under every point of view in which I had had an opportunity of contemplating him, as one man may reasonably entertain for another: his own contempt for my origin and situation could not possibly exceed mine both for his literary attainments and for the qualities which I saw were the preponderating ones in his mind and heart. As he was exceedingly ambitious of showing off his learning before his father, he often interlarded his conversation with common-place scraps of Latin and Greek, such as are to be found in all the selections first taught to young beginners in the languages. These, though often misquoted, and generally misapplied, passed off very well with Mr. Carberry, who was no great judge of the matter: he considered them as convincing proofs of the vast progress made by his son in the paths of elegant literature, and congratulated himself on the assurance that his utmost wishes would be gratified in the future fame and distinctions he must acquire.

Probably it never occurred to Maurice that it was possible for a blue-coat boy to have knowledge sufficient for detecting the errors of a pupil at so celebrated a seminary as that where he was a student;—nay, in the vanity and self-sufficiency of ignorance, he perhaps

had no idea that he ever was guilty of errors. But as I happened to be a tolerably good scholar for my age, so, though two years younger than Maurice, I was very capable of detecting them. I saw plainly that he was not only far behind me in learning, but that even the little he had was very superficially acquired;—that in truth there was not a single branch of knowledge in which he was tolerably well grounded. His quotations were sometimes brought-in so very mal-à-propos, that I could with difficulty repress a smile, and it was putting some restraint upon myself that they were not made a subject of amusement with my fellow-students at the hospital: nothing but respect for Mr. and Mrs. Carberry, and a high sense of what was due from me to them, withheld me from making them so. But as I did not think it equally necessary to practise this forbearance with respect to Katherine and Walter, in private with them I did not fail to put them in as ridiculous a point of view as possible, to make amends for my forbearance with regard to others:—with both I had many a hearty laugh at Maurice's expense. Two things only did this illustrious pupil appear to have learned effectually at his seminary, and these were,—to entertain a sovereign contempt for his father, and for every thing con-

nected with trade, and to look forward with eager expectation to his death, and to the inheritance of his ample fortune.*

As on the occasion of my first interview with *Count* Maurice, (for this was the name by which he was always known between Walter and myself,) he had not failed to introduce his intimacy with his schoolfellow the Earl of Borrowdale, so I never saw him afterwards that the Earl's name was not by some means or other forced into the conversation: indeed the only instance in which I ever knew him show any thing like ingenuity, was in his contrivances to introduce it how foreign soever it might be to the subject under discussion. But I soon found, and I must confess with a secret delight, that this intimacy, upon which he valued himself so much, was a school intimacy only:—when these dear friends were at their respective homes for the holidays, they were unfortunately at so great a distance from each other, that it was impossible any intercourse should be kept up between them. The Earl's house was, as Count Maurice had announced to us, in Portman Square; and during his minority it was inhabited by the Countess Dowager, his mother, from whom he learned that Chatham Place was such an immense way off that it was impossible to think of visiting there. When

therefore the school broke up for the holidays, the Earl always took an affectionate leave of his friend, accompanied with expressions of extreme regret that the remoteness of their residences from each other must debar their meeting again till the time arrived for the school to reassemble. Maurice was no less grieved at this separation, indeed it is probable that his grief was the more genuine of the two; yet he was too fond of the idea of having a peer for his friend at any moment, to feel the spirit which some will perhaps think he ought to have felt, that if the Earl did not choose to be his friend at all times he should not be so at any. Indeed the Earl's friendship was the more valuable, since though at the school there were many *sons* of noblemen, of baronets, and of rich untitled commoners, yet there was no other actual peer but himself. The case, however, during the holidays being unfortunately such as I have described, Count Maurice could at these intervals only detail all the clever things said and done by the *Earl* of Borrowdale, for so he always called him, and talk of the wonderful feats they performed, and the many pleasant schemes they had together;—this dear friend was still, during their stay in town, to him an invisible being. I had so often heard the Earl's witticisms detailed, which

I, having only the plain understanding of a commoner, thought rather showed his lordship's dullness than his genius, that he became a by-word with me, and the retailing them, equally with Maurice's quotations, formed no unimportant contribution towards the hilarity which generally reigned in the walks taken by Walter and myself whenever I was down at Langham.

Reader, I hope thou art now impressed with a sufficient degree of veneration for the character of this heir apparent of the Carberry family.

CHAPTER XIII.

Revolution of opinions and inclinations.—Doubts, difficulties, and perplexities.—The delights of castle-building.—Strange ideas concerning the clerical office.—Doubts and difficulties rather increased than diminished.—A medium found to dispel them for a time.

FROM the time that my juvenile partiality for my father's trade began to subside, I contemplated with perfect complacency, nay even with delight, the idea of devoting myself to the church, till the two last years of my residence at the hospital. During that period my inclinations again experienced an important revolution. It was not that my old partialities returned upon me with a force not to be resisted,—that ardour once cooled, was cooled for ever. Other ideas first made me look forward with no satisfaction to my future destiny, and these ideas long dwelt upon, were strengthened at last to such a degree as to end in a determined repugnance to it.

They did not originate in any want of respect for the clerical profession, for I always considered it with very great respect, and who that had been in the habit of contemplating the character of Mr. Armstrong for a long course

of years as intimately as I had been could do otherwise? The objections to it which now took possession of my mind, as the profession which I was to follow myself, arose from a very different cause. They shall be here detailed under the veil through which alone I then contemplated them:—if afterwards I had reason to think that my mind was much influenced by motives which I did not then confess, it was not that I intentionally deceived others or myself, but that I really was not at the moment awake to feelings of which I became afterwards but too powerfully sensible, nor was aware of the secret influence which they had obtained over me. The objections I did urge were however I think sufficiently forcible, as my prospects then stood, to determine me to act as I did, and for Mr. Armstrong to advise as he did, if it was by our judgements alone that we were to be swayed: if afterwards it appeared that these objections were not so strongly founded as I had seen reason to suppose, still it must be urged that I could not foresee events, I could only act from the complexion which things wore at the time, and Mr. Armstrong could only advise according to the premises which I laid before him.

Had I seen a prospect of being well established in the church, it is probable that I

might never have entertained a thought, or wish, of abandoning the profession; but as I grew to be of an age when I was capable of judging of my prospects in following it, they seemed to me very far from encouraging. I saw that it was little in the power of any man to make his way in it by his own talents and industry alone, that he must principally rely for promotion on the favour of the Great, and in my situation how was that to be obtained?—Born of obscure parents, in an obscure country village, where was the man whom I could hope to interest in my behalf?—It was entirely out of the power of the benefactor to whom I owed every thing else, of Mr. Armstrong, to assist in bringing me forward in the church, and where else could I look for a patron?—For his own elevation he was indebted to the spontaneous patronage of the proprietor of his living, by whom the preferment was bestowed upon him as a recompense for the exemplary manner in which he had discharged his duty in a subordinate station; but this had not created him an interest which would enable him to assist others. Indeed, if he had any interest, it might be wanted for his own son;—for that chance it must be reserved, it could not be employed for me.

My only prospect then in taking orders was,

if I should behave well at college, to obtain a fellowship, and perhaps a curacy; but in this situation I must linger on till the best part of my life would be past before I could expect to make any further progress in my profession. After waiting five-and-twenty or thirty years, I might succeed to a college living, by which time my habits would probably be so fixed to a college life, that I should be unfitted for the enjoyment of any other. I therefore felt that I should infinitely prefer the following some employment in which I could get forward by my own exertions;—in which, at the end of every day spent in industry, I should be able to consider myself with pleasure as one step nearer to the attainment of an easy competence: —beyond this my wishes never aspired.

I must own too that there appeared to me something more honourable, more manly, in being able to reflect that whatever I might enjoy in future of this world's goods was my own acquiring, was the fruit of my own industry, than that I was indebted for them to the favour of another. It was not, I hope, that I ever cherished that proud, I would almost say that *sullen* feeling which cannot bear the idea of being under obligation to another. The Creator of the world has so constituted every thing here below, that we must necessarily be de-

pendent on each other for the greatest comforts we are capable of enjoying,—for our social and domestic comforts. But there is a point beyond which it appears mean to carry this dependence; and I had seen so many instances of those who had favours to confer, expecting from those who were to receive them a greater degree of servility than I could consider as consistent with a manly character, that I not only shrunk from such patronage, but felt myself physically incapable of submitting to it. I mean not here a general censure; —there are many liberal minds who have so happy an art of conferring favours that they seem rather receiving them: but all cannot meet with such patrons, and the dread of meeting with one of an opposite character made me revolt from the very idea of patronage.

But if I were to abandon the church, the next question was, what profession I should follow. In a visit to my father soon after these doubts were first awakened in my mind, I being then just turned of sixteen, he was summoned as a witness in an important cause, at Salisbury, relative to the inheritance of an estate, the late owner of which having died intestate, several claimants to the property had arisen. My father thought this a good opportunity of showing me something more of

the world, and carried me with him to Salisbury, where I attended during the whole time of the trial. It lasted for two days, and they were indeed days of inexpressible enjoyment to me. Some of the first pleaders from London were engaged in the cause, and the witnesses examined were very numerous. I had never been in a court of law before, so that every thing was new to me, and I was fortunate both days in having an excellent place in the court, from which the whole *posse comitatus* of the judge could hardly have for one moment removed me. I was in ecstasies with all I saw, with all I heard; and my imagination was at length so fired, that nothing I thought could ever satisfy me but being a lawyer: it seemed astonishing indeed how my father, in settling a profession for me, could ever have thought of preferring the church to the law. The judge and counsel appeared to me beyond all comparison greater men than a clergyman:—how eloquent soever a clergyman may be, yet he prepares every thing beforehand, he has time to reflect upon his arguments, to arrange his plan, and his matter, before he sits down to write; or even if he should preach extempore, he can think beforehand what he shall say:—but a pleader must speak off hand from the impulse of the moment, he has no time to

prepare, he must remark upon what he has heard, he must retain the evidence in his memory, and be attending to that when he might otherwise be reflecting upon the speech he is about to make:—and yet, notwithstanding all these disadvantages, he speaks at last with as much readiness and fluency, aye, with ten times more too than most clergymen:—O, never, never can I be satisfied unless my father will consent to my being a lawyer!

In short, I immediately, in idea, commenced my career, I entered myself at the Temple, I went through the regular course of study, I was called to the bar. This was no sooner done, than business crowded upon me on all sides, so that I scarcely knew which way to turn myself; I pleaded several very difficult and important causes with the most brilliant success; I arrived at such eminence in my profession that I was hailed as one of the wonders of the age; and at a period of life when three fourths of those who enter on the study of the law are still toiling hard to gain a few guineas every term, I had arrived at no less honours than being made lord chief justice of the king's bench. Then followed a peerage, a magnificent house in one of the best parts of London, a coach and six, and lastly, a beautiful wife and fine family of children, for it

would then be necessary that I should marry, and transmit my honours to posterity. Indeed it would have been too cruel to the sex if I had not invited some favoured fair to share my honours.

Whoever has a taste for the delights of castle-building, and I believe that this is a species of architecture of which most people are fond, will have an idea of the vast pleasure I enjoyed during several weeks that these visions were constantly floating in my imagination. But after having indulged in them for some time, I began to grow sensible to the baseless nature of the fabric which I had been raising, and it was soon blown to the ground by the breath of reflection. The vast expense of educating a man to the law stared me in the face, I saw that it was far beyond my father's means, and I thought no more of it.

Still I was not any better reconciled to the thoughts of taking orders:—my indifferent prospects in the church did not the less haunt my mind, nor could I get rid of these visions with the same facility that I had discarded those of my chief-justiceship and its appendages: and if the bar seemed out of my reach, there were many other ways of getting a livelihood within it, that would be much more congenial to my feelings.

But the important question of all was, how was the subject ever to be mentioned to my father?—in what language could a determination on my part to renounce the clerical profession be clothed, so as to make the disappointment at all supportable to him?—For a long succession of years, even from before my birth, the leading object of his ambition had been to have a son a minister of the gospel;—his whole thoughts, his whole cares, had been directed to the attainment of this darling object;—with unshaken steadiness and perseverance had he sacrificed every consideration of personal indulgence to the pursuit of it;—and now, when he had reason to flatter himself that the moment was not far off for the accomplishment of his wishes, could any thing render palatable the cruel mortification he must endure when told that they must be abandoned for ever?—Could I even be justified in thus stabbing to the heart a parent who had done so much for me?

Yet on the other hand it might be made a question, how far a parent could justly claim a right to bind down his child to a profession for which he had a distaste, merely to gratify what the most extended candour could hardly call any thing but an idle vanity. It was not my individual happiness that had been his

aim in the measure proposed; he thought only of the delight he should himself feel in the aggrandizement of his family, in seeing the name of Danville rise to eminence and distinction.

If the gratification of this vanity, however, was his only object, might not that be as effectually gratified by seeing me rise in one way as in another?—Supposing I were to go into the mercantile line, in that I might equally arrive at distinction, nay, at much greater distinction than as a clergyman. In the latter capacity the utmost extent of my prospects was to become a country parish-priest, to preach to, and to be admired by, the rustics of a country village;—there was nothing very flattering in this, nothing very eminent, very distinguished. As a merchant I might accumulate a large property, which in any country, and more especially in such a commercial country as England, is a sufficient passport to distinction;—to arrive at a peerage even, by means of my wealth, was not beyond the bounds of possibility,—such things had been, and might be again. But the church had no such prospects to hold out. Even supposing me to rise to the highest honours she has to bestow, they are personal only, and die with the possessor; his family does not enjoy a higher rank in society than hundreds of others

in which no such dignity has ever been enjoyed. On the whole, then, in becoming a merchant I should rather promote than counteract my father's plans for raising his family, and rendering it illustrious. And yet I was forced to own to myself, that this was a fallacious mode of viewing the subject; I could not but be sensible that not only was he desirous of aggrandizing his family, but that his heart was fixed on one particular mode of aggrandizement. To see his son in the pulpit, to hear him admonish and instruct an admiring congregation,—it was by this, and this alone, that his heart could be fully gratified.

But there was yet another consideration. I had conceived, I did not then perfectly know why, though I have since thought that it was to be accounted for very naturally, an extreme dislike to the idea of going to the university. What, as far as I could then account for this prepossession, seemed my leading objection to it was, that I thought my birth might occasion me to be looked down upon contumeliously in a place where there were so many youths of fashion and fortune assembled together. I might have reflected, however, that all the students, amid so numerous a band, could not be of this description; that there must be persons of all ranks and degrees, and proba-

bly enough whose origin was quite as obscure as mine to keep me in countenance. I might indeed have been well aware that it was possible to cite more than one instance, of persons not born in a higher situation than myself, who had yet, from their talents, been always held in high respect and esteem there, and who had risen, through them alone, to some of the highest honours and distinctions among that body. But such a determined repugnance to going there had taken possession of my mind, that I could see only the dark side of the story; and though I had always disregarded, nay, treated with contempt, such allusions to my birth as Count Maurice sometimes chose to indulge himself in, it appeared to me that the case would be very different when reflections of that kind were not to be confined to one mouth only, but were to surround me on all sides. However this be,—whether or not the feeling was in any way to be justified, it was certainly a very predominant one in my mind.

These debates and conflicts harassed me more and more, as the prospect of my leaving the hospital drew near, without my having ever been able to summon up resolution to impart them to any one. Sometimes I flattered myself that my repugnance to the church was not absolutely invincible, and that by reason-

ing with myself it might be overcome;—there were even moments when I thought it absolutely subdued, and that I could cheerfully acquiesce in my father's wishes: but I always found, in a few days after one of these imaginary victories, my repugnance return more forcibly than ever. I resolved, however, upon mature deliberation to remain silent till I had quitted the hospital, as I thought that the change in my situation which must then necessarily take place, would afford a more favourable opportunity than any other for laying open the state of my mind;—for displaying my objections to the mode of life chosen for me, and requesting to be allowed to choose one for myself more congenial to my inclinations, and affording me better prospects in the world.

This time then being arrived, I resolved that the first person to whom my embarrassments should be disclosed should be my ever kind friend and counsellor Mr. Armstrong. I knew that two important objects would be thus obtained. In the first place, I had so great a respect for his judgement, that, if he had discouraged my abandoning the church, I believe I should without hesitation instantly have given up the idea; and in that case it was much better that the subject should never be mentioned

to my father. In the next place I was assured that, whatever his opinion might be, it would be delivered with gentleness and kindness, that from him I should have no angry locks or hasty sallies to encounter;—whereas from my father I was well aware that a like forbearance was hardly to be expected.

Accordingly, having taken leave of the hospital, and having come down to Langham, where I was to make a short stay before my going to Cambridge; one morning when I went as usual to read with Mr. Armstrong, finding him alone, I took the opportunity of requesting that he would indulge me, instead of reading, with some conversation, as I wished earnestly to request his opinion upon a subject which concerned me very nearly.

He was kindly pleased to say that he was sure I could have nothing to consult him about, on which he should not be most ready and happy to give me his very sincere opinion; and even added that he felt himself flattered by the confidence I was reposing in him.

Thus encouraged, I opened at large to him the important secret;—I explained to him all my doubts, my fears, my difficulties,—my reluctance to going into the church, with the motives on which it was grounded, yet my uneasiness in reflecting upon the disappoint-

ment which I knew my renouncing it would occasion to my father.

"My dear Samuel," said the good rector, "I am not surprised at what you say, and have that opinion of your good sense and judgement, that I dare venture to return your confidence with equal confidence on my side. I can perfectly enter into your feelings. I cannot but acknowledge that there is much justice in your ideas, and will own that your prospects in the church have often given me serious concern. To the mind which has a proper dignity of feeling, the idea of living a life of dependence upon others is certainly very painful ;—it is mortifying to waste the prime of our years in the wearisome expectation of a promotion for which, when it comes at last, we perhaps cease to have any relish. I even once ventured to hint these things to your father, but found his mind so strongly fixed upon his plan, that he could never be brought easily to relinquish it ; and I thought it better to let the matter rest till you were grown up, and your disposition with regard to it should appear.

"I will even go further, and own to you that, as far as concerns myself, I should probably never have engaged in the profession, from the same reasons which induce your wish to

abandon it, had it not been for the peculia- situation in which I stood at the moment when I was of age to take orders. You know, Samuel, what that was: I could not have felt myself acquitted to my own conscience if I had not done what lay in my power to assist my sisters; and this was the only means in my power of assisting them.

"I do not speak thus from want of a proper respect for my profession;—where those engaged in it conduct themselves in such a manner as their situation requires of them, I will not hesitate to say that it is one highly to be respected.

I think the pulpit, in the sober use
Of its legitimate peculiar powers,
Must stand acknowledged while the world shall last,
A most important and effectual guard,
Support, and ornament, of virtue's cause.

COWPER.

"But I also think that the clerical profession has never in any country been put upon the footi g which it ought to be; and for this reason principally the clergy have never been the general objects of respect which every well-wisher to the cause of religion and morality must wish to see them. Young men are placed in the church at much too early a pe-

riod of life, before they can be expected to contemplate in their proper light the sacred nature of the duties they are taking upon themselves. They consider the profession merely as the means of gaining a subsistence, and, since it does not require the same exertions of industry as many others, are very ready to adopt it upon that account. We are so prone to habits of indolence, that for the sake of indulging them we are ready to sacrifice our independence, and court the patronage of those who can place us in ease and affluence, without these habits being interrupted, even at the expense of servilities little consistent with the true dignity of man.

"Not that I would by any means recommend that surly independence of spirit which disdains to be under an obligation to any one. We are formed to assist and endeavour to promote the happiness of each other, by reciprocal kindness and good offices; and it is striving against the very nature which our Almighty Creator has implanted in us, when we would make ourselves wholly independent of others, and isolate ourselves entirely from society. But there is a proper independence which every man ought to seek, and it is a much more common fault among mankind to make themselves too dependent upon, than too

independent of others. Either extreme ought equally to be avoided: but the former is far the more common failing; and as far as it concerns the present question, I am afraid it must be acknowledged that indolence has carried more men into the church, than worthier motives.

"To make the clerical profession as respectable as it ought to be, I think that there should be no office in the church without a salary annexed to it sufficient to support the incumbent in a creditable and respectable way, and I would have that salary paid in almost any way preferably to tythes. I would have no more persons ordained to the ministry than there are offices for them to fill;—I would never allow them to hold more than one piece of preferment, and on that they should be obliged to reside;—and I would not have them admitted into the ministry under thirty years of age. I know that this plan is not without its objections, that even under such regulations, many persons might still only

> .... for their bellies' sake
> Creep and intrude, and climb into the fold;
>
> MILTON.

but I think there would be a better chance than there is at present of seeing the clergy what the institution intends them to be,—faith-

ful guardians of the morals of those who are committed to their care, and examples in their own conduct of the virtues they inculcate. At any rate, young men would not then be pushed into the church at a period of life when it cannot reasonably be expected that the wildness of youth should be past, and the mind sobered to a sense of the serious charge it is undertaking ;—nor should we be so liable to see the ministers of our holy religion, instead of running with eagerness the race of their high calling, running races for preferment, or running after the sporting races of Newmarket.

"Samuel, I have given you my opinion very freely upon this subject ;—I have done so because I thought your own remarks showed good sense and judgement, and that you would not misapprehend my sentiments. Yet the subject would never have been started by me, if you had not yourself expressed in a very decided manner your wish to pursue some other course of life, rather than that which your father has chosen for you. I should have thought it extremely wrong to say any thing which might prejudice your mind, or interfere with the views and wishes of your parents ; yet after what has now passed, I shall not scruple to declare it as my decided opinion, that the moment any one feels within

himself a repugnance to the clerical profession, that moment he becomes an improper person to enter into it.

"There is not much chance of a man's discharging properly the functions of any profession to which he is decidedly averse; much less the important duties attached to this. I think there is a peculiar turn of mind requisite for making a proper figure as a clergyman, as a peculiar organisation of the frame is requisite for arriving at perfection in certain sciences. We would not make a public singer of one who had no voice, or ear for harmony, or a painter of a man incapable of distinguishing colours, or insensible to the beauty of proportions. Without a fine voice and ear, no man can succeed in attempts to entertain the public as a musician;—without taste and judgement in drawing, colouring, in the grouping of figures, in the contrasts of light and shade, who could arrive at distinction as a painter? And can we think that any man, be his propensities ever so widely estranged from the sacred duties of the clerical office, shall yet fulfil them with that punctuality, that strictness, that reverence, that fervour and solemnity, which shall make both him and them respectable and respected?

"I am not of that class of enthusiasts who would talk of waiting for an immediate call

from heaven, who would encourage a man to look for inspirations of the Holy Spirit, ere he should consider himself qualified to become a minister of religion; but I would have him examine his heart very carefully before he engages in the ministry. I would have him consider deliberately whether he feels himself divested of conceit and vain-glory, firm in the faith which he teaches, deeply impressed with the vast importance of a holy and moral life, and with the assurance that no preaching can have effect unless the preacher himself be a pattern of the virtues he recommends. If he cannot resolve to abstain not only from the great vices which degrade and deform our nature, but even to endeavour to keep himself clear as much as possible from those smaller errors which are but shades in a generally virtuous character;—if he cannot resolve, in short, to lead a life of as perfect virtue as the frailty of our nature will permit, he is unfit for the charge he would undertake, he ought never to think of engaging in it.

"In your particular case, my dear Samuel, there is a circumstance which I recommend especially to your very serious consideration. Though I would exhort you to avoid any profession for which you feel a decided repugnance, and this more particularly, yet I would have

you equally consider, how much it has been even from your birth the wish of your parents that you should be a clergyman;—that to this end all their efforts have been directed;—that they have spared no pains within the compass of their industry to procure the means of educating you for this profession;—that they have denied themselves every thing but the mere necessaries of life, in order that all which their earnings could supply above mere necessaries, might be devoted to what they considered as for your advantage.

"I am far from regarding these considerations as conclusive to binding you down to their views, but I think that they ought to be allowed considerable weight. Though it seems indisputably the duty of a parent to allow the inclinations of a child every proper preponderance in deciding the avocation to which he shall be devoted; yet the superior experience in the world, and greater maturity of judgement in the parent, ought equally to be respected by the child, and suffered to have due influence in deciding how far he shall conform himself to his parents' wishes. You will consider well, whether, in opposing the wishes of your parents, you may not be laying up for yourself a source of future regret and remorse in the disappointment you have occasioned them.

"Weigh these things well, my young friend, there is no necessity for being precipitate in mentioning the subject. When you have reflected more fully upon it, we will have some further conversation; and if you still remain in your present disposition, I will readily undertake to speak to your father, and use all my interest with him to consent to the change you desire."

Thus ended my first conversation with the worthy, the benevolent Mr. Armstrong upon this interesting subject. I repeated in very warm terms, for I felt very warmly, my acknowledgements for the extreme kindness he had shown in the patience with which he had heard and answered me, and departed to enter on the meditations he had recommended.

His last suggestions sunk deeply into my mind; they were similar to others with which I had before been visited, and which formed the great, indeed the only stumbling-block in the way of an immediate disclosure of my sentiments. If I must be equally the victim of unavailing regret, whichever way I should decide, there seemed no cause for hesitation on the decision to be made. In sacrificing my own wishes to those of my parents, they at least would be satisfied and happy, whatever

might be my lot; whereas, by persisting in opposing their wishes, I was sure of mortifying them, without by any means being certain of securing my own peace of mind.

Yet there was another point to be considered. In seeking some way of business by which I might sooner be enabled to make a fortune, it would be no small satisfaction to me that I should then have the means of rendering the declining years of my parents easy and comfortable. In the church, before I might have an income adequate to rendering them any assistance, their wants and wishes might rest with them in the peaceful grave. As a clergyman I must live like a gentleman, and the income to which I must expect to be confined perhaps for thirty years to come, would merely suffice for that; it would leave nothing superfluous wherewith to assist them, and they must remain working on to the end of their lives. Against this it was to be considered, that since our happiness or unhappiness is very much the effect of imagination, my father might perhaps feel much less real satisfaction in being supported at his ease in his old age, by a son an opulent merchant, than in being compelled still to seek his food by his own industry, feeling himself the father of a minister of the gospel.

These things I weighed nicely ;—I revolved them over and over again in my mind ;—I turned and twisted them into every possible point of view, but could decide on nothing in any degree satisfactory to myself. Sometimes I was all obedience, sometimes all disobedience, to my honoured parents ; and I am afraid, if I must confess all my weakness, that when the former sentiment was predominant, it was as much the effect of vanity as of a better principle. The idea of martyrdom has something in it very soothing to our self-love ; and as a martyr I considered myself, at the moments when I had heroically determined to sacrifice every consideration of my own feelings to the gratification of my parents :—I was disposed to celebrate my victory with loud songs of triumph ;—I could have written ode upon ode in compliment to my own heroism.

I suffered a fortnight to elapse before I could summon up resolution to renew the subject with Mr. Armstrong, and even then I could only tell him that my mind was still distracted by doubts and hesitations, and I thought that, since I could not please myself, I should determine to please my father. He heard me with his usual kindness and patience, and then said :—" My dear Samuel, since you are unable to make up your mind satisfactorily to

yourself, so as to come to a final decision immediately, there seems a sort of middle course which may be adopted as a temporary measure. Resolve to go for a year to the University, and to stay it out at all events: you are at present unacquainted with the nature of a college life, except in idea, and may find upon experience that it is not so disagreeable as you have conceived it to be. It is true that in this way a year will be lost, if at length you determine against the church, and at your age that is some disadvantage; but in my opinion it will be more than compensated by the superior satisfaction you will have in your ultimate decision. Every thing in your power to reconcile yourself to the situation in which your father wishes to place you, will then have been done, and you will have less reason to call in question the propriety of your determination. This is the best advice I can give you—reflect upon it, and remember that I only *offer my advice*, I do not mean to *impose my opinion*. I wish you to reflect upon it, I exhort you to do so;—you have good sense enough to enable you to decide for yourself, and be assured that I shall not consider it as any slight upon me, if my advice is not followed."

Here was a plan proposed, on which a determination might be much more easily

made. I saw that there was abundance of reason and judgement in the counsel offered me; and though an important part of my objection to going into the church arose from a conviction that I should very much dislike an university education, yet, all things considered, I thought it better to give the matter a fair trial. Two days after, I therefore again waited upon Mr. Armstrong to acquaint him that I had determined to follow his advice, and go for a year to college. Every idea of mentioning the subject to my father, was in consequence for the present entirely dropped.

I accordingly went through my year of probation, but was not more, if any thing even less, pleased with a college life than I expected, and quitted Cambridge in the summer for the long vacation, if not with a fixed determination, at least with a decided wish, never to return to it. Still, however, I had so much apprehension of the storm which must ensue on my father's being admitted into my confidence, that I gladly availed myself of an invitation to accompany a fellow collegian on a tour into Scotland, to put off the evil day yet awhile longer, and did not arrive at Langham till the middle of August, being then turned of nineteen.

CHAPTER XIV.

Original propensities seldom wholly eradicated.—A walk taken malgré soi.—Different objects of men's idolatry.—Rhapsody outrhapsodized.—The rhapsody abruptly terminated.

And what became of your young friend Walter during this period? For a long time we have scarcely been favoured with a syllable concerning him, and we left him extremely thoughtless and careless, and occassioning his father the utmost uneasiness on that account; nor could any consolation be derived to him, but from the hope and expectation that this fatal propensity in the boy might wear off gradually as he should approach to manhood.

Courteous reader, all this is very true; such were the hopes and expectations of Mr. Armstrong; but, alas! they were for a long time most cruelly disappointed. Walter continued the same giddy thoughtless animal as ever; and instead of his excellent father's uneasiness on that account being alleviated, it was daily augmented. He had no kind of vicious propensity; he was one of the sweetest of tempers, gentle, humane, and benevolent, perfectly free from pride, wishing to do kind acts, yet wholly unable to give deep attention to any

thing, or any attention to the same thing for long together. How he came by this disposition seemed a perfect ænigma;—it was not by inheritance, for Mr. Armstrong himself was always steadily attentive to whatever he undertook, and poor Sophia had been more than commonly assiduous in the pursuit of every branch of instruction which she wished to attain;—it could not be from example, for again the example which he had constantly before his eyes in Mr. Armstrong was exactly the reverse:—neither could it be caught from careless associates; for I, who was always his principal associate, was so far from showing a similar disposition, that wherever I was known I almost uniformly acquired the appellation of Old Steady.

Yet from whatever cause it had arisen, the effect was such as to create the most alarming apprehensions in a father's mind. It was a germ which, if it did not grow up into vice, as there was much reason to fear, must almost inevitably lead him into numberless dangers and difficulties, and preclude his rising to eminence in virtue, or in any kind of attainments. It besides occasioned infinite embarrassment in the arrangement of any plans for his establishment in life. It was Mr. Armstrong's idea originally to send him to college and edu-

cate him for the church; but such a disposition it was obvious was in the most imminent danger of being led astray by an university life. He was the very kind of person upon whom the worthless and dissipated were likely to fasten themselves; over whom they would soon obtain unbounded influence, and lead him whithersoever they wished. Besides, Walter's was not a disposition to make such a minister of the gospel as Mr. Armstrong would wish a son of his to be, and he early saw reason to think that the idea of his being educated for holy orders must be abandoned. What profession he was fit for, it was indeed very difficult to say, certainly for none in which industry and diligence were required; he seemed fit only to be a gentleman of independent fortune, and it was totally out of his father's power to establish him as such.

The great question, whether or not he should be sent to school, was decided by the extreme delicacy of his health, which, as well as his thoughtlesness of character, rather increased than diminished with his increasing years, so that it was impossible for his father to trust him from under his own eye. Here therefore he continued, and continued unaltered as to the leading features of his disposition, as well as to the delicacy of his frame, till he was about

sixteen. He then caught the measles, which were attended with so many alarming symptoms, that the utmost apprehensions were entertained for his life. He however recovered, and it seemed in the end to occcasion a favourable turn both in his constitution and disposition; in a short time he evidently grew stronger and more healthy, and also, though still volatile, began to pay more attention to study, and took much more pains to retain what he acquired: he accordingly made for the next two years considerable advances in learning.

Still his chief delight continued to be drawing and painting. He never had any instruction in either except from his father: but Mr. Armstrong had a fine and correct taste in both; and Walter had so much natural genius, that little more was necessary to make him an accomplished artist, than to have the exuberances of his genius corrected by a refined and matured judgement. He had, besides, the opportunity of studying some good paintings at the Hall. Mr. Conway's collection of pictures was not large, but extremely select; and Walter was permitted the free use of them, not merely as objects of study, but to copy any that he wished.

Still, though paying more attention to the different branches of learning in which he was

instructed by his father, he never of himself selected any books for his own reading but such as had some connection with the leading propensity of his mind. He read over and over again the classic poets of antiquity, and in general all authors whose imaginations had in their writings afforded fine subjects for the pencil, and was perpetually making sketches from them. Nay, I am afraid, if the truth must be confessed, that the sacred writings of the Old and New Testament were rather studied by him with a view to the fine subjects they offer to the painter, than for the sake of the important truths which they contain.

The year before, in my conversations with the worthy rector upon my own concerns, he had more than once expressed to me the great uneasiness he was under upon Walter's account, and the impossibility he found of even conjecturing in what profession he could possibly be placed. He had endeavoured, by studying his disposition and the turn which his inclinations seemed to take, to discover what might appear best to accord with them,—determined however not to urge him to any, but whatever he seemed inclined to, to state to him fairly the advantages and disadvantages attending it, and then leave him to his choice. He should very gladly, he said, see him incline to some

branch of the medical profession, and rather flattered himself that he might be gratified on this point, as he had of late taken very much to the study of anatomy. The inference was certainly not an unfair one on the part of the father; but this study in the son was directed to far other views.

When at length I had returned to Langham after my college campaign and my Scotch tour, I was desirous to get over as soon as possible the conflict I so much dreaded, as the necessary consequence of the communication now to be made to my father. I had just seen Mr. Armstrong and Walter on the day of my arrival, and was received by them with their usual kindness and affection;—the next morning I bent my steps towards the rectory, in the full intention, if I should find Mr. Armstrong at leisure, to inform him of my determination, and to consult with him on the best means of carrying my designs into execution.

In my way thither I met Walter with his pencil and sketch-book in his hand, who said he was going to take a walk, and that I must positively accompany him. He could not rest another day, he said, without taking a view of a very pretty spot about three miles off, which he had only recently discovered; "and," he added, "I shall like of all things, Old Steady, to have you

as my companion. That you are a most dull frigid soul in these matters, and more disposed to worship the deity who presides over sermon-making, if such an one there be, than the divinity whom I adore; that celestial Being who first inspired the pencils of an Apelles or a Zeuxis; and that I don't care a fig therefore for your taste, are indisputable facts. And yet, strange to say, notwithstanding this conviction, since we used formerly to scratch over together those strange deformed groupes of objects which we then dignified with the name of pictures, and compliment each other on our performances, I am from habit more delighted with your approbation than with that of a hundred other people for whose tastes I have an infinitely higher respect."

Though I was at that time in a very unpicturesque humour, and would much rather have prosecuted my plan of relieving my mind by some conversation with Mr. Armstrong, yet Walter had seized my arm, and drew me along with him, so that I was compelled to accept his invitation whether disposed to it or not. But even without this gentle violence I should probably have yielded, since I always had so strong an attachment to him, and he had such an invariable, inexhaustible fund of good nature, that I scarcely had the power of

refusing any thing he asked. Occupied however as my mind was, I could not help being very thoughtful and abstracted, so that I left him to harangue upon the beauties of the spot whither we were going, without paying much attention to what he said, or making the least attempt to put in a word.

"Why, Sam," he said at length, "what's in the wind now?—what can make you so very grave and solemn?—I verily believe you are already making your first sermon. If so, cou'dn't you, when your hand's in, make a sermon or two for me? for, to tell you the truth, I don't believe that I shall ever have the heart to make one for myself."

"No, Walter, I am not making a sermon, but I have something upon my mind which makes me thoughtful; I have an important question to decide; and whatever my decision may be, I have little chance of being satisfied with it."

"That's agreeable, I must own. But I too have something upon my mind; and yet for all the world I could not be as solemn and serious about it as you are. 'Tis no light matter, neither. In one respect, however, I am better off than you; for I shall probably be spared the trouble of determining for myself, the matter will be settled for me."

"So that at any rate you will not be subjected to the chagrin of being dissatisfied with yourself; and, let me tell you, that is no light consideration. You may be disconcerted at the manner in which the question is determined, but you will not, on that account, have any cause of quarrel with Walter Armstrong."

"Which, as you observe, is a consideration not to be despised. But if I am in no danger of quarrelling with Walter Armstrong on this account, there is another subject on which I have great ground of quarrel with him. Would you believe it? the rascal has taken it into his head not to be satisfied with the profession to which he has good reason to believe his father destines him, and wants to follow another, which he may be very sure will not be approved. Whereas a certain friend of his, like a good boy, is perfectly obedient to the wishes of papa and mama; and, while he is delighting them with holding forth from the pulpit, will be a stranger to any other feelings than the transport he is giving them. Sam, I heartily wish that I could be as good a boy!"

A compliment never comes so mal-à-propos as at the very moment when we feel that we are taking some step exactly the reverse of the thing for which we are complimented. An eulogium upon my filial obedience, made at the

moment when I had just determined to act in direct opposition to my father's wishes, was so like a reproach, that I even felt humiliated by it; and would gladly, from an impulse of conscious shame, have at the same instant laid open to Walter all my most secret thoughts. I however checked myself, as it seemed better not to mention the thing to any body but Mr. Armstrong while matters rested as they were. Besides, I could hardly make Walter the confident of my own secret, without at the same time confiding to him the sentiments his father had declared respecting young people being permitted within reasonable bounds to follow their own inclinations in the choice of their profession. And though this would have been very encouraging to my young friend, yet I did not think that it was from me the encouragement ought to come;—it was time enough for him to be made acquainted with his father's sentiments when he himself should think proper to disclose them.

While my mind was occupied by these reflections, we had walked on for some minutes in profound silence. It was one of those days not unfrequent in this climate, when heavy clouds, floating through the atmosphere, darken it as they pass; and when the sun begins to emerge from behind them, the finest variations of light

and shade are thrown upon the surrounding objects. At this very minute, the sun beaming from the verge of one of these clouds threw a gleam of radiance which might almost be called sublime upon an adjacent hill. Walter pulled me by the arm:—"O Samuel!" said he, "can you see with a soul unmoved the enchanting effects produced at this moment upon the landscape, through the conflict between that glorious luminary and the opake body by which it is partially obscured? For my part, they make an impression upon me which it is impossible to describe, which seems something like enchantment:—my senses are, as it were, suspended;—every nerve seems in a trance. Could I but produce the exact representation of such an effect upon canvass, I should be arrived at the very acmé of my wishes, for I should think myself a painter equal to any of the brightest ornaments of the art that the world could ever boast."

"And you would be more gratified by producing the finest picture that ever was painted, than the finest sermon that ever was composed?"

"Indeed, Sam, I cant't say but I should.—To tell you the truth, if I do become a clergyman, as I suppose I must some day or other, I know that I never can be one of the bright

luminaries of the profession; never could shine in it as my excellent father has done. It would be wholly out of my power to set about making sermons: just the same thing would occur with them as formerly with my Latin lessons, —I should be sketching a beautiful form upon the paper when I ought to be expatiating on the charms of a beautiful mind;—and instead of pathetically lamenting the deplorable fall of our first parents, and the sin and misery which it has entailed on their descendants, I should be contrasting the noble forms of the first pair in their state of innocence, with the degraded ones which human nature has since assumed. In short, Sam, but that you are to be in it, I should be tempted to say that there is scarcely any profession I dislike the thoughts of so much as being a clergyman."

"Oh, do not, I entreat, be scrupulous of saying any thing you please upon the subject out of delicacy to me. In whatever profession my lot may be cast, if I am but still thought worthy of the same place I have ever enjoyed in your friendship and regard, you may think of my profession as you please."

"With many thanks for that obliging permission, I shall certainly avail myself of it. As to friendship and regard, I should hate myself if I could ever entertain a less degree of either

for you than I do at present, whatever I may think of your profession,--even though your old passion for shoeing horses should return, and you should not be able to settle to any thing else. But look at that tree, Sam! how beautifully picturesque are its forms! how elegantly are its wavy branches disposed! What a charming object for the foreground of a landscape! It doesn't signify: there are, and ever will be, clergymen enough in the world: for my part, I must be a painter, only that I know not how I shall ever venture to tell my father so."

"Why should you be so much afraid of it? If you can only be a dauber, he might reasonably object to that; but if you can be an eminent painter, the case would be very different."

"Do you really think there would be any hope of his acceding to my wishes?"

"If convinced of your abilities for what you would undertake;—satisfied on this point, I cannot suppose that he would have any other objection."

"Oh, if that's all, it is but trying; and if I don't succeed, 'tis easy at last to come back to the story of a black coat and a surplice: so, as you encourage me, Sam, I think I will venture to break the matter to him. Still there's one thing:—you know I never can make any thing

of such a pursuit in the country, I must live in London, and I'm sure he would not readily consent to that."

"Still I think you judge too hastily. He might perhaps prefer your living in the country: but this is not the only profession which you would be obliged to pursue in London; in the law, or in physic, there must your studies be pursued."

"Well, then, it is resolved!—and oh if I am but permitted to follow my inclinations, how transporting will be my lot! Sam, with what raptures will my heart expand, when left at liberty to dwell upon nothing but the beauties and the wonders of nature and of art!—to be no more doomed to look towards wearing out tedious days and nights amid the dry studies of mathematical calculations; or to think of brooding over and hatching dull sermons for the edification of others, but for the mortification of myself! My head is not organized to studies like these; it wants a more ample field in which to range, a field wherein imagination may have some space to sport and play. I have no taste for enforcing common-place saws, trite maxims, and worn-out apophthegms. A preacher has but one road, which he must travel over and over again:—he can say nothing

that has not already been said a thousand and a thousand times. Give me a profession where something is to be created;—in which the student is not tied down to one hackneyed beaten track, but may move with the eccentricity of the comet's course:

> Where a new world leaps out at his command,
> And ready nature waits upon his hand.
>
> POPE.

"Still less could I endure to load my brains with a pack of dull laws;—to think of devoting myself to the contemplation of a moral world of deformity, as is the lawyer's doom, instead of contemplating a physical world full of beauty, under aspects the most beautiful! He thinks not whether the form and situation of such or such a tree be picturesque or not; he regards not whether such a house or barn be so disposed as to harmonize with the surrounding landscape;—he considers only whether the situation in which they stand may not be of that ambiguous nature, that it is difficult to say whose property they are, and hopes that the decision of this important question may help to fill the pockets of his brethren and himself. What share can the soul take in studies such as these? —what pleasure has any one in the beauties of creation, who contemplates them only as objects of property to this or that man, in the

quiet possession of which the law is bound to defend him? And as to the army or navy, I have no taste for having my body perforated by a cannon ball, or for being served up as a *gourmandise* at the table of a shark: there is nothing very picturesque in these things.

"Then, if we turn to physic, what are the enjoyments of him who has to dwell continually upon the contemplation of human nature only on its melancholy side?—who instead of the light airy form, the eye sparkling with the vivacity of youth and health, has to contemplate it upon the bed of sickness, languishing under a painful, perhaps a loathsome disease, when the features cease to be animated, when the brilliant lustre of the complexion is no more,—when the body, wasted by suffering, no longer presents those fine forms on which the eye could dwell for ever with unwearied rapture?—O no! to be a physician would harrow up my soul!—I was born to view every thing with a picturesque eye:—Heaven created me with the soul of a painter, and it were striving against the decrees of Heaven to think of inspiring me with other ideas.

"As the beams of the refulgent lamp of day in its declining course gild the horizon, while I adore the power which could create and can uphold so magnificent a luminary, a

body of such transcendant splendor and brilliance,

> ....that, with surpassing glory crown'd,
> Looks from its sole dominion like the God
> Of this new world,—
>
> MILTON.

my soul is filled with enthusiasm at the splendid effects which its lengthened shades throw on the surrounding landscape; and I sigh to think, that however enchanting may be the imitative arts, still how infinitely short do they fall of the glories of Nature herself! Then sometimes will airy visions float in my fancy; and I figure to myself that it may, perhaps, be my blessed lot to strike out some new idea in the sublime art of painting;—that I may make such wonderful discoveries in the power of forming and of blending colours, that I may produce effects as yet unknown on canvass,—effects of which even the aspiring genius of a Claude himself never could dream. O if this should prove no vision!—But no!—that would be happiness too great!—my senses hardly could stand the mighty trial.

"Or when storms have been abroad, when by the furious raging of the tempest all nature has been thrown as it were into one undistinguished scene of wild confusion,—

> ....when lightnings fired
> The arch of heaven, and thunders rock'd the ground,

When furious whirlwinds rent the howling air,
And ocean groaning from its lowest bed
Heaved its tempestuous billows to the sky:—
AKENSIDE.

at these awful moments, with what deep regrets have I been seized in considering the transient nature of each varied aspect into which the clouds, the trees, the objects around, were thrown! I could have wept with vexation that no pause was allowed when each variation amidst the storm-tost forms that they assumed might separately be displayed. I have been half frantic with reflecting that even the wild pencil of a Salvator himself could but give the scenes of desolation which it so wonderfully exhibits, from general ideas;—that still a storm can be but an effect produced from general recollections, it never can be one particular scene of awful tumult which we ourselves have witnessed. O Samuel!—on such occasions I have actually been so abandoned to the enthusiasm of the moment, that I have even fallen upon my knees and prayed devoutly to him who

Rides on the whirlwind and directs the storm,

that he would bid the elements pause but for an instant, while I had time to sketch the sublime effect before me, ere it should be lost, vanished for ever. Sam, I hope you would not

have thought me profane in these moments? You, who are a better judge of these things than myself, resolve me."

"As to the profaneness of the thing, I will not pretend positively to decide upon it;—but I certainly should not have expected to find your prayer granted."

For my own part, as mine was always rather a dull matter-of-fact imagination, not at all given to similar rhapsodies, the listening to this very fine farrago seemed to me somewhat as if I had been listening to an Otaheitean oration. I could not help asking myself what sort of effect flights such as these would have from the pulpit; and I thought indeed that Walter judged very rightly in saying that he was wholly unfit to be a clergyman.

The *sècheresse* of my observation had the effect of recalling my companion in some sort from the lofty heights to which he had been soaring, down to the vale of realities here below; and he could not forbear bursting into a hearty laugh at the nonsensical jargon with which he had been entertaining me. After his fit of laughter as well as his fit of the heroics had subsided, we renewed our more sober discussion of the question; when I felt so thoroughly convinced, from what I knew of Mr. Armstrong's sentiments, that Walter would meet with no decided op-

position to his wishes, and that at any rate Mr. Armstrong would be very desirous of being made acquainted with them;—I felt so assured of these things, that I did not hesitate to urge him to a full and explicit disclosure of the whole matter; while he, glad to be thus encouraged, assured me that he would break the ice the very first opportunity that presented itself.

CHAPTER XV.

Doubts and difficulties still further increased.—Nocturnal meditations.—Afflicting news at the end of them.—A sick-room.—An affecting change.—A cruel apprehension.

My walk with Walter, and the conversation to which it had given rise, entirely prevented for that day my making the communication I had intended to Mr. Armstrong. The night which succeeded it was spent much more in ruminating on what had passed, than in the arms of soft repose. While I was perfectly satisfied that I had done right in encouraging Walter to explain his wishes fully and fairly to his father, from the conviction that, whatever they were, the latter would earnestly desire to be made the confident of them, I was yet by no means satisfied that the communication would be agreeable to him. And here I could not help adverting to another reflection, and contemplating with no slight degree of chagrin and vexation the perverseness which seemed to govern human events. Notwithstanding the manifold advantages that both Walter and myself might have derived from our education under such a man as Mr. Armstrong, rebel nature had opposed itself so firmly to the excellent precepts in religion and mora-

lity which he always mingled in every branch of his instruction to us, that we were both at this moment likely to be the occasion of great uneasiness to our parents, from our own wishes and inclinations having been pleased to erect themselves into a determined opposition to theirs.

With regard to myself, these ideas for awhile took such strong possession of my mind, that they shook almost to its foundation the purpose on which I had before been so fully decided. It seemed as if both Walter and myself were in a conspiracy to throw oblique reflections on the excellent man under whom he had been educated entirely, and I principally, by showing that the system he had pursued was not one which tended ultimately to inspiring a proper sense of filial duty. I thought that to the advocates for the rod it would be no small matter of triumph if they could say, "See how these two boys who were to be educated without it have turned out!—both are become in their maturer years a torment to their parents."—Out of mere regard therefore to Mr. Armstrong, and that I at least might not be the means of bringing discredit on his system of education, I had nearly passed upon myself the irrevocable sentence which was to doom me to a life of inward mortification;—

for such, and nothing else, could I feel the going into the church.—Not that I had been wholly educated without the rod, or at least without the fear of it; since, though I had no apprehensions of it under Mr. Armstrong, at the hospital I was as liable to it as at any other school.

Then again, when I had nearly come to this self-denying resolution, the idea against which of all others my heart revolted, that of being doomed to a life of dependence and expectation, presented itself in all its horrors;—I shrunk from it appalled, I could see nothing else; and no sense of gratitude either to my father or Mr. Armstrong could resist the feeling with which it inspired me. Besides, I could never abandon the hope of contributing to make the declining years of my parents more comfortable; I even wished to persuade myself that it would be acting more virtuously towards them, to disregard their present favourite idea, and make them, spite of themselves easier in their situation at a time of life when they would both so much want it, than to comply with an idle piece of vanity for the sake of their gratification at the present moment.

Indeed, my ideas, which had long been floating and vague respecting my future views, had for some months been fixed on a more

specific object, and one which I thought would lead to my having the means of assisting my father and mother, as speedily as any that I could pursue;—which had besides the additional recommendation, that it seemed one perfectly within my reach. In the course of my frequent visits to Mr. and Mrs. Carberry during my latter years at the hospital, I observed that Mr. Carberry had several young men of tolerable education in his service, either as clerks in the compting-house, or superintendants in different parts of the business; and I thought that, if he would give me a situation of this kind, my views would be fully answered, and I should be in the road to fortune. That he would do so appeared a reasonable hope, considering the notice that he and Mrs. Carberry had always taken of me, and that I seemed connected as it were with the Armstrong family.

I arose in the morning still full of the ideas by which I had been haunted all night, when, before I was entirely dressed, I received a message from Walter, desiring me to come immediately to the rectory, that his father was very ill, and he was under the cruellest alarms about him. On inquiry of the servant who came with the message, he told me that Mr. Armstrong had gone to bed the night before very

unwell, and complaining of his stomach being much disordered; he had passed a very indifferent night, and was still in bed, so much indisposed, that, at his son's earnest request, he had consented to send for the physician from Salisbury, and that a messenger was already dispatched for him. He added that Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Walter both wished very much to see me.

Mr. Armstrong had long been subject to periodical attacks of some internal complaint, which was the more alarming, as his medical attendants never seemed thoroughly to understand the nature of it. I had seen him many times under the influence of them, and every time with increased alarm and apprehension lest it should terminate fatally. I immediately ran, or rather flew, to the rectory, overwhelmed with anguish, and could scarcely have been more agitated when I arrived there, if I had already known that he was no more. I suppose my countenance and manner betrayed my feelings; for on seeing me he took my hand in the most affectionate manner; "Samuel," said he, "do not distress yourself upon my account; I am indeed much indisposed, but there may nevertheless be no real cause of alarm. It is one of my old attacks, and, though worse than usual, may yet I hope be recover-

ed."—Indeed, often as I had seen him thus attacked before, I never saw his looks so affected, and I was impressed with the most alarming apprehensions that the attack was indeed worse than usual. Walter was sitting by his bedside,—he did not speak, but grasped my hand with an eagerness which spoke his feelings more emphatically than they could have been expressed by words.

A few moments pause ensued, for Mr. Armstrong seemed deeply affected, though less with his own situation than in seeing the distress which it occasioned to Walter and myself. At length he said, "Sit down by me, Samuel."—I obeyed, and sat down upon the bed.—"I have many things to say to you both, my children," he continued: "and though I would fain hope that Heaven may yet spare my life, and permit me to aid your inexperience with such counsel as I can give you; yet since all human events are uncertain, and the present moment only is our own, I dare not delay for an instant the purpose, which, if delayed, I may never be able to execute at all."

Walter, whose heart and feelings were as warm as his mind was volatile, could not for the moment hear any more, but hastily quitted the room, to give vent to emotions which were no longer to be suppressed, yet which he

was unwilling should appear in his father's presence.

This was one of the most affecting moments I ever passed in my life;—never did I find the resolution and fortitude of mind which I had always been emulous to acquire, put to so severe a trial,—for never did I see in Mr. Armstrong the piety and resignation of the christian so subdued by the feelings and anguish of the man and the father. He took my hand, which he pressed between both his with a warmth of affection mingled with an agony of soul which I can never forget, while tears streamed from his eyes. "Samuel," he said, when he recovered the power of speech—"yes, I am ill indeed, but Heaven's will be done!—To that I strive to be wholly resigned; yet I am forced to confess that if it be his pleasure to call me away at this moment, I cannot quit the world without one severe pang!—'tis there!—there!"—and he waved his hand towards the door at which Walter had gone out.

"If I have erred," he proceeded after an interval of some minutes, "in the endeavours I have uniformly pursued to make him what I have always so earnestly wished to see him, an honest man, steady and firm in the cause of piety and virtue,—Heaven knows the sincerity of my wishes, of my efforts,—O let me hope

then that he may pardon my errors, and that my poor child may not become the victim of them!"—Again he paused for a few minutes, then with a tone of more composure, "Yes," he added, "surely Heaven will vouchsafe his protection to my dear boy!—Yet it is not to barren prayers alone that the aid of Heaven is extended, our own efforts also must be exerted to attain our ends;—Heaven will bless those efforts when piously directed, but he expects that man also should do his part.—Be it mine then to do what still remains within my power, for guarding him from the path of error when I may be no longer here to be his monitor and guide.

"Samuel," then he said, addressing himself to me, "I shudder when I reflect on the probable fate of a heart like his, when it ceases to be under the constant vigilance of a father's eye,—when there shall no longer be one so nearly, so tenderly interested for him, to watch over and regulate its movements. I see him still, even at his years, as much a child in his conduct, as when he was scarcely six years old, and I dread that when left to himself he will never act but on the immediate impulse of the moment. You know him well; he is yet free, perfectly free, from any vicious propensities,—he is yet unchargeable with gross and

palpable deviations from the right path; but the world is corrupt, and he may easily be led astray:—how can I then not tremble at the dangers he will run, when he must of necessity mingle with the world? His heart is warm and affectionate; but these qualities, which, accompanied by a sound judgement, would render that judgement doubly valuable, as the attendants on a head so little regulated, it is much to be feared, will only help to involve him in perpetual difficulties, if not to lead him into absolute vice and irregularities.

"You have often expressed yourself, my young friend, as highly grateful for the share I have taken in your instruction,—you have perhaps even expressed more gratitude than I thought was strictly due to assistance given at so little expense to myself either of time or trouble;—but if your heart has felt only a small part of what your lips professed, now is your time to show it,—to your care, to your kindness, I commend him!—I have long thought that I must perhaps not look forward to seeing him established in the world, and have not now to make the necessary provisions required by law for placing him under a proper guardianship till he shall attain that age when he must be left to his own guidance. Yet it seems to me that with a disposition such as

his, more may be done to withhold him from going astray, through the counsels of a companion and an associate, a friend of his own age, who to as much discretion as can be expected at equal years adds an influence and ascendancy over his mind which may insure him a ready and cheerful hearing, than by admonitions from a person of maturer age.—Samuel, let him find such a friend in you!—I have narrowly watched your conduct whenever you have been under my own eye; I have inquired into it of the superiors of that institution where you were educated; and neither did I ever witness myself any thing in it, or ever hear any reports from them concerning it, but what have given me entire satisfaction. Be then to Walter the friend he so much wants!—He respects, he reveres you as he ought to do,—he does much more,—he loves you with such unbounded affection that to you he will always listen readily, nor will find any restraints which you would impose upon him hard to be borne. It is my firm conviction that you will never recommend to him any thing inconsistent with the truest principles of virtue and honour, with the character of an honest man and a christian; and it is this conviction which makes me anxious to consign to you a charge so dear. You will not then

surely refuse to undertake it!—'tis a father,—a dying father perhaps,—who asks it,—he entreats your continued friendship to his only child!—he would say even more than friendship, if he did not consider every thing that can be asked of man, included in that sacred name.—He knows that 'tis an arduous task he would impose upon you, but 'tis the strongest proof that could be given of the high esteem in which he holds you.—Say, will you be this friend?"

I scarcely know what I answered, my heart was so oppressed. The varied feelings with which my bosom was agitated as I listened to words so deeply affecting, as I witnessed the emotions with which they were delivered, as I revolved in my mind the situation of the speaker and my own, hardly left me the power of speech. It was some time before I could utter a syllable intelligibly:—at last in broken sentences I expressed my deep sense of the confidence he was placing in me,—I assured him, as well as my faltering accents would permit, that my attachment to his son would have been sufficient to secure my doing every thing in my power to show myself really his friend, even if he had never laid so solemn a charge upon me; but that the confidence with which he had honoured me, would make me

think any service I could render him not less one of my most sacred duties than one of my highest pleasures.

"It is enough," he said; "my mind is now relieved of what it was above all things anxious to say to you;—there are yet many subjects which I hope we shall be able to talk over; —I would fain have some further conversation with you on your own views, as well as on Walter's: but I must first be quiet awhile to recover myself;—whatever may now happen, I shall not quit the world without having spoken to you on the subject nearest my heart;—that is an inexpressible satisfaction. But now, my dear Samuel, retire and leave me to compose myself, I would not spend my strength too much at once.—Go seek Walter, he is deeply affected, and wants consolation—adieu for the present:"—then again clasping my hand eagerly, he waved me to retire, and I quitted the room in silence.

I now went in search of Walter, anxious beyond measure to learn whether he had disclosed his wishes to his father the evening before. I found him somewhat more composed than when he quitted Mr. Armstrong's room, and ventured to make my inquiry without hesitation or circumlocution.

"O yes, yes!" said he, "there is my mi-

sery, my reproach!—Why did you counsel me to take such a step?—Could I have entertained the remotest idea of the consequences it has produced, I would have died a thousand deaths myself rather than have mentioned the subject.—Samuel, we have killed the best of men."

"Killed him, Walter?—what can you mean?"

"'Tis that I fear which brought on this attack."

"How?—impossible, surely?"

"Too true, I fear."

"Nay, speak more plainly, you harrow up my soul!"

"Fain would I banish the idea from my bosom, but it will not quit me;—O 'tis a burden upon it which no time can ever remove."

"Speak, for Heaven's sake!—you cannot mean what you say!"

"Nay, I know not.—As we sat together in the evening, after turning the matter over and over in my mind a hundred and a hundred times, after devising endless ways in which to open the subject, I at length did begin, though I scarcely know how, and we had some conversation upon it.—My father expressed no decided opposition to my wishes,—he said he was rejoiced that I had made an unreserved

disclosure of them, since there was nothing he so earnestly wished as to enjoy my full confidence. As to the profession of a painter, he said, it was undoubtedly one capable of being highly honourable to the professor; 'but you must be sensible,' he added, 'my dear Walter, that a man's saying he will be a painter is not the only thing requisite for deciding the question;—the first point to be considered is whether he possesses the talents necessary for being one. Any man may undoubtedly become one to a certain degree; but I trust, my son, that you would not wish to undertake such a profession, unless there appeared a fair chance of your rising to eminence in it. Yet even supposing that on the score of talents there were no doubt upon the subject, suppose a man decidedly capable of rising to eminence, there are still many objections to be made against engaging in it, as the means on which to rely for our subsistence; and this is a consideration, my son, of which you must never lose sight. I have always been anxious to impress upon your mind that I cannot leave you a fortune adequate to your support, without the assistance of your own industry; to that therefore your views must be directed as one great object in the choice you are about to make: it is one which cannot be put out of

the question. Heaven has created us with wants which must be satisfied, and, in the case of nine tenths at least of mankind, by their own exertions either of mind or body. The profession of a painter, if properly pursued, certainly leads to enlarging and ennobling the mind, for it never can be properly pursued without the professor preparing himself for it by a course of elegant and improving as well as moral and religious study. It ought to turn the mind to the contemplation of all the most glorious works of the great Creator, and through these works to imbibe the loftiest conceptions of the author of them;—it ought to lead him to dwell upon great and heroic actions, upon actions of exalted virtue.—In this point of view it is not only unobjectionable, but one which a man is laudable for aspiring to: yet there is another in which it must be taken, where many objections are presented, especially in this country. It is not conformable to the ideas of the English nation, to raise the art to the distinction which, in my opinion, it ought to hold in civilized life; to encourage it for its own sake alone; to devote it to the ornament and splendour of the country; to the decoration of our churches and public buildings. Like all other things, it is little esteemed here but as an object of traffic. There are but

two ways in which a painter is likely to derive much profit from his art in England ;—either as a portrait-painter, or in painting popular subjects for the engravers. Neither of these can be considered as among the higher branches of the art. The latter are seldom subjects which would be chosen by true genius ; they are commonly some passing whim of the day, or are destined to commemorate some action or event which had nothing in it really worth recording, and is only exalted by national vanity into something great. Such a painter, I will fairly own, I should not wish to see my son.' A few more observations to this effect," continued Walter, " were all that he made ; and he concluded by saying, ' But we will renew the subject some other time : at present I am really not well, and unequal to the exertion of much talking.' It was then that I first thought of looking at him ; my eyes had hitherto been cast down, I was too much abashed to look him in the face : but now that I raised them up, I cannot say how much I was shocked to see his countenance so pale and ghastly."

" Yet why suppose that this was the effect of your communication ?"

" There is but too much reason for it ; he had not before complained of indisposition. He certainly was secretly chagrined at what I had been

saying; yet from kindness to me endeavoured to suppress his feelings, and was therefore the more severely affected by them."

"Indeed I think you here seek a source of unnecessary regret; and in a matter in which, Heaven knows, there is sufficient cause of real affliction."

"I wish I dared think so; but this would only be throwing a false varnish over the fault I have committed."

"If I thought that you really had committed a great fault, I would be far from seeking to extenuate it: but neither, surely, is it wise or right to aggravate unnecessarily a distress which without this addition is sufficiently acute. You say that you had not observed your excellent father's looks till he himself said he was indisposed:—had not your mind been preoccupied, they might not, perhaps, have passed so long unobserved, and you might have been more readily alarmed. Let me indulge in this idea! Let me not think for a moment that your communication could have produced so deplorable an effect; for what then must be my feelings, when I reflect that it was my counsels alone which occasioned it to be made?"

Here our conversation was broken off by the arrival of the physician, which called our attention to other matters.

CHAPTER XVI.

Different exertions of medical skill, with their results.—Ne sutor ultra crepidam.—*A touch of the dead languages.—A most unexpected and mortifying catastrophe.*

THE result of the physician's visit was expected by us with no small degree of impatience, and we took an opportunity, after it was over, of requesting in private his unreserved opinion respecting his patient's case, that we might be well assured of what we had in reason either to hope or fear. He said that Mr. Armstrong certainly was very ill, and it was impossible not to consider him as in a very hazardous situation, yet he did not regard his state as by any means hopeless:—in any case, it was not probable that his dissolution would take place very speedily;—it would most likely be a protracted illness, and, he was afraid, attended with much suffering. Mr. Armstrong's generally mild and placid disposition, he observed, was much in his favour; and the more his attention could be diverted from thinking of his malady without its being called to subjects that required deep thought, or any considerable exertion of intellect, the better chance would there be of the disease being finally subdued.

In this report we undoubtedly found no

small degree of satisfaction and consolation, for I own I was extremely disposed to apprehend the case quite desperate;—yet it was at the same time a painful reflection, that while exertion of intellect was deprecated for him, there was a subject upon which his mind must unavoidably dwell very forcibly. To be able to divert his attention from it was a thing we could not hope for, since his own situation would naturally lead to his dwelling upon it the more eagerly. All I could hope was, that means might be found to delay any further discussions till he might be more able to go through them without injury to himself.

As my father had expressed great anxiety, when I set off in the morning for the rectory, to hear more particulars concerning the afflicting event which carried me thither, I waited only till I had spoken with the physician to hasten home and satisfy him. This was not, however, till towards noon. I found him not long come in from the exercise of his medical talents; —he had been summoned to a farmer in the village, who also that morning, on getting up, had been seized with a violent pain in his stomach. "Well, Sam," says he, on seeing me enter, "and how did you find matters at the rectory?—I hope in God, not so bad as the servant made us believe!"

"Indeed, father, I am sorry to say that the servant did not exaggerate at all: poor Mr. Armstrong has a most severe attack of his old complaint, much worse, as far as I can judge, than ever he has had yet. I never saw him look so ill; for I have generally remarked that, considering how much he seemed to suffer, his looks were surprisingly little affected."

"Poor man!—God send him well through it!—which I dare say there isn't a man, woman, or child in the parish, aye, and in many other parishes too, that wouldn't say Amen to that wish.—Well, and so they've sent for a doctor from Salisbury; and what does he say?"

"That the patient is very ill, and in considerable danger, but he by no means gives up the case as hopeless."

"And I suppose he has been writing subscriptions by the dozens for him, and that he's to have all sorts of messes and medleys to take, poor man!"

"Indeed I don't know, father.—The servant was dispatched immediately to Ambresbury with the prescriptions, that the medicines may be made up by the apothecary there; and I did not see them, so that I do not know whether there were many different prescriptions or not."

"Aye, there's another thing.—these concoctions must always be made up at the apothe-

cary's, which then there is another hour or two lost. Now, it's my thoughts, Sam, that if he would but have taken thirty or forty grains of jalap the moment he found himself ill, which I think there isn't hardly such another medicine to be found, why, Lord bless you! by this time would have had all the effect possible, and he'd be nigh hand three parts well; only want a glass or two of good wine, or mayhap a little peppermint water, just to comfort his stomach, and set it all to rights again. If you had but seen Farmer Burrell there!—Lord, why he was taken as bad as could be, which upon that they sends for me promiscuously to come and see him. There he was, with such a pain and colick all over his body, which so he had been ever since he got out of bed this morning, he could hardly tell where it was worst, it was all over so bad. He was sitting up in a great chair in the corner of the kitchen chimney when I got there, winching and screwing about, and twisting this way and that way,—and 'Lord,' says he, 'Danville,' when he sees me come in, 'it's my belief that instead of subscribing for me, you'll have to toll the bell and dig my grave, and your wife will have to furnish my funeral.' So says I, 'Mr. Burrell,' says I, 'to be sure,' says I, 'I'm very much obliged to you for the favour to my wife, which she'd certainly be very

thankful for it, but I hope 'tisn't come to that yet neither; let's hope there's physic enough left in the world to do your job for the present, so that there'll be no need to talk of funerals and such things; though for that matter, if it should be so, I don't suppose there's any body, for many a mile round, that would do it genteeler or cheaper than my old dame Hannah.' And then he gives a great squeal; and 'O!' says he, 'nobody ever was in such pain, to be sure!' 'Yes,' says I, 'neighbour, I'm afraid there's somebody now at this time in as great pain as you, and you'll be sorry to hear of it too, which that is poor Mr. Armstrong.' So then I tells him all about how you was sent for in such a hurry; but I wouldn't say any thing about the doctor from Salisbury; which I thought, mayhaps, thinks I, if he knows it, he'll be for having the doctor come to him too, and it's my thought that I can do him more good than he can. So this was the first word that any of them had heard about Mr. Armstrong, and sorry enough they was to be sure. 'But come,' says neighbour Burrell, 'sorrowing won't cure me;' and then he winched and squealed again:—' and so,' says he, 'Bob, says he, tell me what you thinks will!' Which then I says, says I, 'If you please to let me feel your pulse,' says I; and with that he gives me his hand, and I feels, and it went

thump, thump, thump; gallop, gallop, gallop: and says I, 'Neighbour, it's my thoughts that the best thing you can do is to take about thirty or forty grains of jalap, and that will work away all that's amiss, and I hope you'll soon get well.' Which then he says, says he, 'I don't believe we have any jalap in the house; but I was thinking, that if my wife was to heat a little table beer with some spice, and then put a little drop of gin to it, and I was to take that hot, it would bring off the wind, and I shouldn't be in so much pain.' 'No,' says I, 'neighbour,' says I, 'I'm not at all of your way of thinking; you know that I've had a pretty deal of practice now, for it's best part of twenty years since I begun, and I always found that 'twas the best way to clear out what we have within us before we think of taking in any thing more; and I have brought a dose of jalap with me, which I thought that if in the case I found that it would be right, it would be ready at hand, and no time lost in sending for it; so, if you please to take my advice, I'll mix it up and give it you directly.'

"'Ay, come, Thomas,' says his wife, 'Bob Danville's right enough;—you know I telled you myself that I was sure 'twas only that you had eat too much yesterday at the christening of your first grandchild there at our son's at Ambresbury.'

'No,' says neighbour Burrell, says he, ''tis no such thing: you wanted to persuade me once before, when I had just such another colick, that I had eat too much, because it happened to come just after our audit dinner at the Hall; but I won't be bamboozled in that way. I'm sure that I ought to have something warm and comforting; so don't talk to me no more about your jalap and such kind of nonsense.'

"'Well,' says I, 'neighbour, so you may have something warm if you've such a great mind for it, for we can put half a glass of gin or so to the jalap.' For you know, Sam, I thought, if we could but pacify him to take it, why that was all we wanted; and 'twould all go down, and work all the same, whatever 'twas mixed in; and I knowed that he was but a bad hand at taking physic when I was sent for to him once before, a good many years ago. So I was right enough; for he says, 'Well then,' says he, 'mix it up, and I'll see what I can do.' Which then I was very glad to hear him say that. So I asks his wife promiscuously for a cup and spoon, and some water, and the gin, and mixes it up and gives it to him. At first he did keck and make wry faces; but I kept persuading him, and so down it went at last; and I dare say that by this time 'tis almost all worked off, and

he's three parts well. And so it might have been with Mr. Armstrong, only that your doctors and apothecaries don't like to subscribe jalap, because 'tis so cheap, and doesn't bring money to their pockets."

"But, father, Mr. Armstrong's illness may not be absolutely of the same nature as Mr. Burrell's; at least, 'tis certain that it does not proceed from eating too much at his grandchild's christening; and the same remedy cannot be good for all complaints. Besides, you know he does not like gin, though neighbour Burrell does."

"He might easily have taken the jalap without it, however; and there could be no harm in trying it. If it didn't do good of itself, it would at least clear the way and make room for other things.—Well, God send that he mayn't die for want of it!—But we shall see now which does best, the Salisbury doctor or I, and which gets well soonest, neighbour Burrell or Mr. Armstrong."

Though I always entertained a proper veneration for my father's specific, and thought that it was probably as good a remedy as could have been prescribed for Mr. Burrell's complaint; yet I had not quite the same opinion of its efficacy in Mr. Armstrong's case, and was therefore very glad that recourse had been

had, for him, to the best regular advice which could be procured within a reasonable distance. Indeed, in the case of neighbour Burrell, I thought it at least an even chance whether my father had not, by allowing the gin, counteracted the good effect which the jalap might have had without it.

As to the competition between the Doctors Danville and Rochford, it might safely be pronounced, from the event of neighbour Burrell's illness, that if *dispatch* be the criterion of merit, there could be no doubt to whom the crown must be awarded, since the case of the former's patient came to a very decided issue in only four days; while the latter kept working on day after day, almost without any perceptible effect from his labours.

When I went home in the evening, I found my father exulting extremely at the feats he had performed. Neighbour Burrell, he said, was a vast deal better; he had ordered him another dose of jalap for the next day, and the day after he expected that he would be quite well:—and then he asked triumphantly, whether things were going on equally well at the rectory?

I replied that no rapid amendment was to be expected, but it was with satisfaction I could say that Mr. Armstrong was in less pain than

before he took the medicines prescribed by Dr. Rochford. "Well, we shall see," said my father: "to be sure, 'tis something not to be in so much pain; but when one sends so many miles for a doctor, one has a right to expect something more."

But whatever we might have a right to expect, all that could be said positively for some days was, that Mr. Armstrong was certainly not worse as to the alarming symptoms of his complaint, and that he suffered less from pain than in the first hours of his attack; it was impossible to pronounce that there was any decided amendment.

My father had spoken so entirely without any doubt or hesitation upon the subject of neighbour Burrell's amendment, that I really concluded his complaint to have proceeded merely, as his wife stated, from having eaten too much, and that, the dose he had taken having carried away the load, he would be immediately well; so that the next day, when I went home, I never thought of inquiring after him. I did indeed recollect afterwards, that my father appeared somewhat grave, and was not altogether so talkative as usual, though at the time I scarcely observed it. I was in fact myself under so much anxiety about our good rector, that I was little disposed to

conversation, and therefore more readily passed over a similar indisposition in him. In the course of the next morning, however, being the third of Mr. Armstrong's illness, as well as of neighbour Burrell's, I was called out of the sick-room at the rectory, to my father, who wanted to speak with me below. I found him with rather a long and melancholy countenance, and in a corresponding tone he inquired whether the Salisbury Doctor was expected to see Mr. Armstrong that day?—I replied that he had already made his visit, and had been gone nearly half an hour.

"That's unlucky," he said, with an expressive shake of the head, "and when will he come again?"

"Not till the day after tomorrow."

"Very unlucky indeed."

"What is the matter, then, father?—Nobody ill in the parish, I hope?"

"Only neighbour Burrell."

"I am sorry to hear that he wants a doctor; he must be worse, then, I am afraid? I thought you said, father, that he was getting well very fast?"

"So I thought yesterday, which, 'tis my belief now, that they hav'n't followed my orders, or else perhaps they've given him something that they ought not, and are afraid to own it.

But, somehow or other, yesterday evening he was taken much worse, and this morning he's very bad, and swears he won't take no more jalap for nobody; which that I thought very shocking, for him to swear when he was so bad and afraid he should die; and God knows, I don't think there's another man in the parish that would have done so. But even Mr. Armstrong never could quite cure him of swearing, though he has preached about swearing several times, and as fine discourses, to my thinking, as any he ever delivered from the pulpit, particularly that as he preached last Sunday was a three weeks, from Matth. chap. v. ver. 34, 5, 6. 'But I say unto you, Swear not all: neither by heaven, for it is God's throne: nor by the earth, for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great king: neither by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair of it white or black.' Which, to be sure, though all Mr. Armstrong's discourses are as fine as any body can hear; yet this was a wonderful grand one, enough to make any body, one should have thought, ashamed of swearing. But notwithstanding, however, it hav'n't cured neighbour Burrell, and he swears that he won't take no more jalap, and his wife she can't pacify him; for he says he's sure it has done him more harm than good, which I'm

sure there he's quite mistaken; for if he hadn't a taken it, God knows, he'd most likely have been dead before this time. So now he has got a fancy promiscuously to see the Salisbury Doctor, and he says he's sure I know nothing at all about the matter, and I may go to the devil with my jalap; which that is another very shocking thing to say; but he always was so terrible passionate! So there he lies squeaking and shrieking like a crazy man."

"This is very unlucky indeed, father.—Suppose you were to send for the apothecary from Ambresbury?"

"Lord bless you, Sam, and what could he do?—and what, for that matter, could any body do, when you see he won't take what's subscribed for him?"

"However, if you send for the doctor from Ambresbury, at least, father, they won't have to blame you if all does not go well."

"Yes, but they will blame me, and they do blame me, though it's my belief that 'tis all their own fault;—and there's Dame Burrell crying and sobbing, and such a piece of work among 'em!"

"Shall I go and talk to 'em, father, and see what I can do?"

"Aye, do, Sam, there's a good boy, for

you can talk people over better than I can; you have so much more learning; though mayhap you mayn't know so much about it as I do. But go to 'em and say a few hard words, and then they'll think that 'tis all right."

So away I posted.—I thought indeed that our good neighbour seemed very ill, and to be sure he was groaning and complaining most piteously; but not all my eloquence, and all the hard words with which I interlarded it, could prevail upon him to send for the apothecary; the utmost I could obtain was his consent, that if the Ambresbury Doctor should happen to come over to Mr. Armstrong, he might be sent to his house. I did, besides, persuade him to try a bason of plain water gruel without any thing in it, for I suspected him to be in a fever from the effects of the gin.

This accomplished, I returned to the rectory, where I stayed, as usual, the remainder of the day. In the evening when I went home, I found my father's spirits again extremely elevated with regard to his patient. He had just been with him, and found him a vast deal better, quite free from pain, and quite glad, since he had got so well, that he hadn't given himself any more trouble about having doctors. "And now," adds my father, "I hope people

will believe next time that there isn't a better medicine in the world than jalap, which that I am very sure of."

So far, all seemed well for my good father's prescriptions. The next morning I went to the rectory as soon as we had breakfasted, and left him preparing to visit his patient. In about two hours I was again summoned from Mr. Armstrong's room to him, he wanted to speak with me below. When I went, he began with inquiring after the dear good man above; to which I answered, that he appeared to me nearly the same as for the last two days.

"What, no better?"

"Indeed, it is impossible to say decidedly that he is."

"But certainly no worse, I hope?"

"Oh, certainly not worse."

"Sam."

"Well, father."

"Do you think—do you think—"

"What, father?"

"Hum—do you think, Sam,—do you think—that it would disturb him to hear the bell toll?"

"O, not at all;—he isn't a man to be affected by such kind of things,—he has a mind far superior to those idle terrors.—But who is dead then, father?—Old Stevenson, I suppose

—I heard last night that he was thought now to be really going."

"Aye, but he isn't gone yet, though."

"Who then?—not Alice Fordham, I hope?"

"No, not she neither.—'Tis—poor neighbour—Burrell."

"You don't say so, father?—Why, you seemed to think him so much better last night, that I never should have guessed him!"

"So I thought that he was a great deal better, and so his wife thought too, and he said himself he was quite well, like. But somehow in the middle of the night he was taken quite faint, and gasping for breath, which then the old dame she was terrified out of her life, and away she sends for the Ambresbury doctor, without with your leave or by your leave from him; and when the doctor came, he said there was nothing to be done, that it was a mortification in his bowels; though God knows how he could tell that, when to be sure he couldn't see what was going forward there; but he said it was gone so far that nothing could stop it, and die he must; and so to be sure die he did about half an hour ago. So now I'm sure they didn't mind and do all that I bid 'em; and there's the worst of having to subscribe for people when you can't see 'em take the things yourself, which then you can never

be sure that they'll follow your orders, and so they die; and then 'tis the doctor that's to blame; when, mayhap, he has ordered every thing for the best, and it's their own fault that they hav'n't minded him, as to be sure I think it's the case with neighbour Burrell. So there he lies now a corpse; and if it won't disturb Mr. Armstrong, I must go and toll the bell. And, Sam, do pray take care that every thing that the doctor says is done for our dear good man; for then, if he must die at last, which I'm sure I most heartily pray to God that he may be spared, then we sha'n't have at least to blame ourselves."

I confess that I was a little vexed and mortified at the ill success of my father's attendance in this instance, and the more so, as I could not help apprehending that his yielding the point of the gin in his ardour to get down the jalap, had entirely counteracted its effects and increased the malady. For I then thought, and I found afterwards in talking with the apothecary, that I was perfectly right, that it was an inflammation in the bowels; and that the cessation of pain the evening before, which had given my father so much satisfaction, was really neither more nor less than the mortification coming on. I never saw my poor father much more humiliated than in this affair:—if

mortification of mind had been as fatal as mortification of body, he must have accompanied neighbour Burrell to the grave, instead of assisting only in putting him into it. At the same time I could not help inwardly smiling, to see how ready he was at finding an excuse for his own mistake, and the failure of his favourite specific.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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